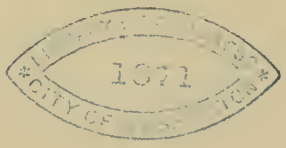
MARY M. CHASE

AND

HER WRITINGS.

HENRY FOWLER,

EDITOR.



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TO CORNELIUS CHASE.

steemed Friend, —

Two years ago, word came to me, like the startling toll of the village church bell, that the life of your daughter Mary was ebbing fast. I broke from business, and sought out the yet unknown way among the silent hills to your retired home. You met me at the door, took my hand, — for you knew me, though you had never seen me, — and led me with quiet step to her bedside. The flush of setting life was on her cheek, and the brightness of a glory soon to be revealed shone from her dark eyes, as she said with a smile of earnest greeting, 'I thank thee, for I wished to see thee again before I die.' Then she spoke words of faith and hope and joy, so full of beauty and truth. 'Hard it is,' she said, 'to part with friends; my cup of life has mantled to overflowing with choice wine; but Heaven now is nigh, and soon I shall drink it new in my Father's kingdom.' And then in animating words of encouragement for the life before me and with a prayer of blessing, she bade me Farewell, in

tones of hallowed sweetness, which have been often with me since. And then I turned back to the strifes of business.

This life of ours is too full of partings. But one Sabbath had your daughter rested 'beside the still waters,' ere there stood before her One bound to me by closer than filial ties. The first glow of morning stole through the window to the East, as that cherished life passed away in beautiful serenity to those Realms which 'need no light of the sun.' 'LET ME GO, FOR THE DAY BREAKETH,' we wrote above her grave. And again I turned back to the strifes of men.

The months went by, and once more I sought out your hill-side home. Again you met me at the door: 'I am glad to see thee, for thou wert one of Mary's friends,' you said, and soon led me with quiet step across the narrow pasture westward, over the stone stile, and down the wooded slope through a winding path, till we stood at the meadow's edge before a grassy mound, and read from the small white head-stone that it was 'MARY'S GRAVE.' Around its base lay wreathed the fresh and fragrant Trailing Arbutus; above, the old Oak, to which she was wont to come, stretched its wide encircling arms, as if in mute yet

conscious protection; at a short distance, the Brook, where as a child she played, murmured its sympathy; on its bank, the graceful Elm which she admired, swayed its arching limbs, relieved in Gothic outline against the sky; the Sun was hastening to touch its red disc to the soft outline of the distant Caatskills, and over the meadow poured a flood of light, whose golden waves rolled up the hill-side, and rock and bush and trunk of maple, ash, and oak stood bathed in beauty: and though she had said to us —

> 'Not with vain longings would I have ye stand
> In my loved haunts, and gaze around with pain;'

yet we mourned together. 'Do not wonder that I bow in grief,' you said, as the sun went down, 'for the Light of my old age is set.'

It was early spring-time, and there were as yet no leaves upon the trees. As we talked together, the eye of friendship detected in me energies prostrated by undue labor. 'Fear not,' you said cheerily, pointing up to the 'old arm-tree,' 'the leaves will come again when the desolate winter is fully past. Thou needest rest. Wait in quietness the coming on of warm summer, and thou, too, wilt find new life.'

The Spring blossoms are come and gone; the leaves

have waved their Summer life, turned to Autumn yellow, and fallen; the meadows have been mown, the grain cradled, and the corn husked; the birds have gathered from the south, reared their broods, and returned; and I am still beneath your roof.

During these months you have reviewed the experiences of threescore years and ten with the satisfaction of a conqueror; you have instructed me by your wisdom, wrought out from a stern experience through independent thinking; on the Sabbath I have been with you to the place where is realized the mingled command and promise, 'Be still, and know that I am God,' as the silent adoration has ascended from the hearts of worshippers; I have found true communion with Nature, in all her glorious revelations through sunset, mountain, tree, and flower; I feel the pulse of the 'new life' you promised. Now it is time to say, Good-bye. On parting, I hand you this volume. You remember the sunset by 'Mary's Grave.' Though the day is gone, shall not these clustered Poems be the stars to lighten the calm Evening of your life?

Your friend, THE EDITOR.

Hill-side Home, Thanksgiving Day, 1854.

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Sketch

OF THE

LIFE OF MARY M. CHASE.

THE LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

From the many appreciative friends of Mary M. Chase, the earnest request has come to the home where her writings are treasured, that those who have no opportunity of reading her manuscripts, might participate in the enjoyment of her legacy, as they shared in her affections, and cherish her memory. It has been also urged, that her writings were fitted to effect much good beyond the circle of friendship by their inspiring influence towards Truth and Goodness, and by the radiating of genuine happiness, which converse with their free, glad nature and genial sympathies might diffuse through the Home Circle; thus serving to lighten the burden of household cares, freshen the monotony of daily toil, animate the strong by a bright example, and encourage the weak by a noble emulation.

Her Letters, it was also suggested, should be presented to young women, as models of epistolary style,

in their out-spoken integrity, their winning unreserve, their conversational grace, and their investment of the every-day experiences of Home, with the true color and expression that pictures warm vitality, while possessing the happy combination of Pathos and Humor which truly represents real life, with its alternating tears and smiles, partings and meetings, griefs and gladnesses.

It was also felt that the Aged might find in her writings some light for their closing days, and the Afflicted some consolation for their sorrowing hearts.

To meet this expressed want, a selection has been made from her Writings, which it was deemed best to accompany with a brief Sketch, presenting a distinct and reliable outline of her Life and Character.

An extended Biography is less essential, because her life consisted much in the workings of her mind, which the writings reveal with peculiar openness, as well in its rare beauties as in its necessitated imperfections; while eulogy would be dissonant with the directness and simplicity of her nature.

It is proposed to devote whatever profits may accrue from the sale of this work to some educational or charitable purpose, fitted to enlist the co-operation of all her friends; and, by reference to Letter XLVI. on 'Greenwood,' it will be seen that this plan harmonizes happily with her own sentiment.

CHAPTER II.

TWO POSSIBLE ERRORS OF THE READER — WOMANLY ADAPTATION — SELF-SACRIFICE.

Faithful as is the transcript of the 'inner life' of Mary Chase, penned by herself in the Poems and Letters, two points exist in which a stranger would probably be led astray. In the first place, some of her poems are pervaded with a sentiment of dark discouragement or unrest, not rightly representing her. 'Indian Summer' and 'The Weary Heart' are examples. So far from this being the case, her character was free from that vague sensibility, which creates out of the grim facts of actual life only huge, distorted apparitions to scare the soul. There was no yielding of the heart to morbid sentiment and despairing tears. Her spirit was strong, and upright, and brave. She met duties, trials, vexations, with a vigor which forthwith conquered or scattered them. She held the helm on the voyage of life with so firm a hand and so sure a hope, that the whirling eddies and the counter currents served rather as excitement than discouragement. I dare not say that she experienced no states of mind in which 'the darkness may be felt.' She may have adopted them for some present purpose with the facility of genius, in order justly to represent them as existing

in others; and at times they may have been developed from within, as in all strong and passionate natures who see with such penetrating insight and feel with such absorbing intensity: yet it was so far from a prevailing element in her nature, that intimacy alone detected it. On the contrary, her natural spirits were unconquerable, her vivacity exuberant, her vitality inexhaustible, and her humor gushing and sparkling day by day, without drought or stagnation, like the overflowing waters of a living spring, whose source lies where neither storm nor heat can vary its continuous outwelling.

In a second respect, more serious, Mary Chase's poetry inaccurately represents her. It does injustice to her genius. She has written nothing, I venture to say, fully equal to her highest power. She had never taxed herself to the utmost on any one composition, nor wrought upon one poem to its greatest capacity of polish. She felt this herself. She was conscious of power in reserve. I know that the world judge by the fruits, and by these alone; yet it is due to her to say that the reaper, Death, came by ere the kernel of the wheat was full and the stalk golden. In my free access to her papers, I have found a large quantity of manuscript essays, tales and poems, many of the last written in pencil on fragments of paper, evidently first drafts, laid aside for future revision. But this labor was never accomplished, and 'there is no work in the grave.' I would say, in hope of the good it may sug-

gest, that it was a wrong to herself and to others that she wrote much instead of perfecting little. She might have done this. Her mental powers had reached full vigor, and needed but the discipline of thorough, unwavering effort. But she did not do it, for several reasons.

In the first place, because only a few of her many poems did she esteem of sufficient value to deserve revising labor; they were dotted down in haste for some special purpose, or to satisfy some impulse from within. A felt disparity between what she had written and what she had the power to write, made her shrink from publication, which would have necessitated revision; while the poet's inspiration was ever impelling her to fresh productions. And secondly, she yielded to the persuasive influence of a large circle of friends, who, perhaps not directly, but through the responsive force of her own outgoing sympathies, claimed many gifts of her poetry. She wrote a score of pieces in the time that should have been devoted to one. In that way, doubtless, she dispensed pleasure to as many homes, but prodigality to others was injustice to herself.

Moreover, she allowed much time to be absorbed by Society, which belonged to her own study. It should not be inferred that she frequented parties. She was averse to them in town, and had little opportunity in the country. But her father's house was rarely free from guests, and often overflowing, and claims were

made upon her for entertainment which seemed at the time right and inevitable. The Ahasuerus of society 'commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels' from the temple of her Genius, and though consecrated to a higher purpose, they were brought and used.

Much of her time, also, was consumed by household duties, and in the use of the needle, both for herself and in the multiplication of ingenious gifts for friends. In every department of housewifery, she executed with rare skill and rapidity. There seemed to be nothing within the scope of female ingenuity that she could not compass, and easy success stimulated to more endeavors. Adaptation to time, place, and circumstance, not by quiet passiveness, but in the more difficult art of active participation, was a characteristic. Moreover, her father's house was ever open to the incoming of the invalid, and she spent many days and nights, of years, in the care of the sick, who preferred no claim except that of a common Humanity. This was most praiseworthy, but not in the path of her peculiar, and, as I cannot but esteem, highest vocation. By no means should she have isolated herself for the sake of poetry; but with less profusion should she have lavished her time and energies on the many who claimed sympathy and care. And sad it is to know that these multiplied claims of friends, accumulated and concentrated at the last, wore away the vigor of her constitution, and the 'golden bowl' lay broken, while yet the costliest wine of life stood untasted.

CHAPTER III.

RAPIDITY IN COMPOSITION — CONSCIOUSNESS OF POWER.

Mary Chase composed in poetical measure, as well as in prose, with remarkable facility. She attained well nigh to improvisation. She could write at any time and in any place, surrounded either by chat or quiet. She wrote responsive to incidents, and replied at the moment in poetry to the voices of Nature, or to the warm words or gifts of friends. Her words formed themselves into verse with such easy naturalness as almost irresistibly to persuade from prose. The best of her simple lays, and indeed of the more highly wrought poetry, were penned in the brief interludes of busy housewifery, and many were written to friends as the appendage to rapid letters. The poem entitled 'Woman' was composed in less than three days, for a special occasion, and more remarkable instances even than this might be mentioned.

It will be observed from her letters that she was aware of her mental power. The soul's strength made itself felt to her self-consciousness, as I am confident it does sooner or later to all gifted ones; and I regard with no questioning, rather with respect, the unfettered

way in which she writes of herself, so far removed from all the littleness of assumed humility. Yet this self-knowledge did not produce pride or vanity. Indeed, she was too true a woman to regard intellectual ability as the highest ambition. Affection was more precious to her than admiration. The letter, in which she reproaches a friend for having spoken of her as a genius, in a mingled strain of raillery and of almost passionate appeal, beautifully reveals her 'femininity.'

She never wrote for fame, or personal aggrandizement. She regarded her powers as 'lent on usury for Heaven;' and the truth, 'For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required,' often pressed with almost crushing weight upon her heart. She combined, in happy union, a sincere humility with a sense of power, which gave her a self-possession, a courage, a feeling of equality to any achievement and of superiority to every emergency, imparting decision to her plans and firmness to her purposes. Yet her standard was kept far above her accomplishment, and tearful sorrow for short-comings was more habitual than satisfaction in success. I have ventured to publish a letter, which unveils the secret working of her mind with regard to itself, in the confidence that it will meet a response in many an appreciative mind. This and the letter referred to above appear at the close of the Series.

CHAPTER IV.

HUMOR — CONVERSATION — PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY.

Mary's letters better represent her gift of humor than her poetry, yet not fully, for one is apt to suspect premeditation on paper; but in her conversation no one could entertain an idea of preparation. She was regarded by all as unsurpassed in the variety, the enlivenment, the alternating light and shade of her fireside conversings. The little things of every-day life, unnoticeable by the ordinary eye, served as the occasions of the daintiest descriptions and the happiest hits, yet without exaggeration or distortion. Her memory received like wax and retained like iron, and thus the anecdotes and facts she had heard came to the surface at the right moment with charming readiness, to serve for illustration or instruction. Past conversations were to her like stereotyped pages, which she could re-produce at any time, and she retained the idiosyncracies of another's language and intonation with extraordinary accuracy. She could repeat every poem she ever wrote, and much of what she had read of others' productions, and thus her quotations and allusions were frequent and happy.

She allowed no unkind sarcasms on misfortune; but

to assumption, or vanity, or sham of any kind, she was merciless. Yet she knew 'that honorable stop, not to outsport discretion.' Indeed, her mind inclined naturally to the Earnest in life. She recognised the True everywhere, and adopted it, while all that was fraudulent in society, or unsound in character, or affected in manner, was offensive to her.

This union of humor with seriousness is by some esteemed rare; by some, impossible; and by others, inconsistent; yet a careful analysis and observation will show each of these notions to be incorrect. The universal fact will appear, that in those strong religious characters, whose moral power controls the circle in which they move, whether compressed within a neighborhood, or embracing a continent, the appreciation of humor, and oftentimes the genius for it, is exquisite. Indeed, a foundation of earnestness seems essential to the development of the highest form of humor, as the most delicate carving can be wrought out of only the solidest wood. The character is not complete in which either department exists alone or in undue proportion; and hence care has been taken, in the selection of Mary Chase's letters for publication, to show the happy balance of her character in this respect. Rightly regarded, the mirth-provoking portions, instead of being incongruous with the deep religious tone of others, are an evidence of its genuineness, as fruit-bearing trees alone produce gay blossoms.

In the social circle it was a necessity imposed, which

she bore gracefully, to fill a large space in conversation. Others seemed ready to listen when she was speaking. Yet her talk did not discourage, but rather developed latent ideas in the minds of others. Her light resembled in effect that of the moon upon the diamond to elicit light, rather than on surrounding stars to pale their lustre; and yet the lead of conversation was her prerogative, which, adopting without asserting, with self-possessed animation, she would stand in the party or sit by the fireside, surrounded by a group of listeners wrought up to the happiest excitement.

It was the use of this prerogative which may have prevented some from being at first favorably impressed. They may have esteemed her frank and brilliant, too soon after introduction; and reflecting that it is 'not yet the third hour of the day' of our acquaintanceship, and 'we hear every one in his own tongue,' ascribed it to the 'new wine' of unfeminine assurance. But I think this impression, if ever made, was never abiding. Longer acquaintance showed that her manner sprung from the inspiration of a true, trusting, sympathetic nature, too thoughtful of imparting happiness to be suspicious of criticism.

Mary was blest in the power of adaptation to the mental grade and scope of those with whom she conversed, and she used it without encroaching upon her own individuality or integrity. It was this facility,

coupled with appreciative sympathy, of which it was perhaps the fruit, that made her the welcome presence in all the farm-houses scattered among the hills about her home.

The happiness and the good of those with whom she was associated or surrounded were ever superior in her view to personal comfort, and she sometimes sacrificed health in her devotion to friends. Wherever suffering and degradation existed, she turned unhesitatingly with means of relief. And not only did she minister to bodily necessities, but she was at the same time watchful of the needs of the spirit. She was in the habit of seeking and supplying the destitute with Bibles and religious books; also striving, by unobtrusive yet timely counsel, to sow some seed of divine truth.

When those words of blessed assurance shall be spoken by the King, 'For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me;' then will rise up those of each suffering class, who will bear witness to her christian care, — yes, and the prisoner, too, will be there, with fast-falling tears, to tell the story of his temptation, his first crime, his desertion by friends, his despair; when she alone sought him out with medicine for the body, and healing words, yet more precious, for the prostrate soul, and by her faithfulness he was healed and saved.

CHAPTER V

COMBINATION OF INTELLECTUAL AND PRACTICAL GENIUS.

The reader, by this time, can hardly fail to have noted the feature of Mary Chase's character, or rather the characterizing form in which it was moulded, which constituted its marked excellence. I mean the *rare union of the executive and the practical with the sensitive and the poetical.* Her writings illustrate the latter; the 'daily beauty in her life' evidenced the former. While so literary in taste and habit, she was as far removed from pedantry as any rosy-cheeked child. She was practical without being matter-of-fact, and poetical without being sentimental. She did not dwell in cloud-land or in dream-land, above or apart from the sympathies and duties of every-day life. The pinion of her genius was strong, and at any time of choice, when the external might not claim attention, she could rise to the pure ether of thought and feeling. But the Real was not sacrificed to the Ideal; indeed, as we have seen, it asserted an undue claim. But this was the result of circumstances beyond her control, and to which she yielded, not only with the apparent resigna-

tion which would satisfy the standard of most, but with the gladness of a hearty zeal.

And these two distinct elements were not separated in daily doings. She was not wholly practical in the morning and exclusively poetical in the afternoon. She clothed work with such a cheerful light by her conversation, when employed with others, or by her own rich musings, when alone, that it was, so to speak, 'transfigured.' Could not much be done by all women thus to make the household yoke rest more lightly, and transform what is now a drudgery into a source of happiness?

It was this combination of two elements generally esteemed incompatible, which forms the most noteworthy point of her character and life, more remarkable than either her poetical or practical genius regarded separately. Hence it resulted that her scope of objects and interests was unusually wide, and her sources of enjoyment and occupation were ever accumulated far beyond the power even of her rapid industry to exhaust. When prostrated by sickness, while teaching in Brooklyn, her spirit drooped somewhat under the iron chain of bodily inactivity; but it was not long ere the great lesson of submission was learnt, and it rose again with a buoyancy that disease could not wither.

CHAPTER VI.

BIOGRAPHY.

A BRIEF biographical record of Mary Chase will not be inappropriate, although many incidents are portrayed in her letters with an accuracy and vigor which another could not attain.

She was born at her father's house in Chatham, Columbia County, New York, on the twelfth of August, 1822. Most of her early life was passed at home until she entered an advanced class in the Albany Female Academy in September, 1843, where she spent one year, and was graduated with the honor of the gold medal for Composition.

Her intellectual tastes developed very early, and her abounding love of Nature seemed born with her. Her insight into the mysteries of that life of beauty, with which the Creator has surrounded us, was clear and deep, and the bond of union close and confiding. She had, what Carlyle styles as 'Nature's choicest gift, an open eye and heart.'

The education of her parents was calculated to develop her mind in these directions. Her father writes as follows in a letter to a friend: —

'Having from early youth been a fervent admirer

of the Holy Scriptures, as also of the glories and beauties of the material creation, I was always desirous that my children's minds should be imbued with the same feeling, as it has constituted one of the chief enjoyments of my life; and for that purpose I embraced all the opportunities afforded me, from the pressing engagements of business, to point out these to them, and to impress on their minds the truth, that these were the works of an Almighty Power, whose glorious attributes they could in time more easily comprehend. As Mary was my youngest, I had more opportunity to take her out with me into the fields and woods, from whence she could see the widespread landscape stretching far away to the blue horizon, dotted with villages and farm-houses, cleared fields teeming with their cereal burden, lofty hills whose tops were crowned with waving forests, and streams silently wending their way through the grassy meadows, or dashing down in roaring torrents from some mountain height. From these two sources she caught that inspiration which afterwards flowed in such graceful numbers from her prolific pen, and from hence she drew much of that beautiful imagery and those noble conceptions with which her writings so abound.'

Mary's mother was one of those women who, never favored with what some esteem the essential advantages of town culture and the range of libraries, seemed gifted, direct from the lavish hand of Nature, with the

refined tastes, exquisite appreciations, and lofty aspirings which finished education in literature and art claims as its exclusive privilege.

She was a woman of beautiful expression and commanding presence, and of a manner uniting gentleness with dignity, which invested her with a serene attractiveness. Mary thus pictures her mother's love of flowers:

'Sweet mother! how precious to her were the commonest flowers! One pleasant June morning I joined the family circle at breakfast, for the first time in months; how had our invalid mother's hand decorated the table! A branch of blossomed sweet-brier lay by each plate, gemmed with dew. She had plucked them herself, walking falteringly, and leaning on her staff. Her love of flowers never left her. All the summer long you might see every day some fragrant pink, or rose, or lily, nestled among the snowy folds of her kerchief, and her table never lacked a glass filled with the fairest that the garden and grove produced. Oh! sweet mother! they tell us that in "the land which no mortal may know," all former envies and affections are forgotten, that "the maid thinks not of her lover there, or the mother of her child," but I long to know whether among all thy old beautiful loves, this one does not remain.'

The system of family education was somewhat peculiar. Punishment was rarely employed to secure obedience, yet a controlling influence was pervading

like the air. Its principle was the power of love, untiring in its manifestations, and its appeals were to the conscience of the child; while the love of Christ, and the all-seeing presence of God, were made living realities. Encouragement and approval for well-doing were preferred to reproof and blows for ill-doing. The training of Mary was culture, and its fostering influence developed individuality.

Mary's poetical genius was early manifested. When she was eight years old, her teacher, residing in the family, discovered one of her poems on 'The Three Days' Revolution in France,' which he deemed extraordinary, and with a pardonable zeal sent it to a city newspaper. When a copy came back, she detected her production in the 'poet's corner,' flushed deeply, and burst into tears. For years after it was impossible to get a sight at her compositions, although she wrote much; and this early piece cannot be found.

The year at the Academy was a happy and profitable one. Her progress was striking, and her success even beyond the warm anticipations of her friends. During the years after graduation she spent much time with relatives in Albany, and through 1846 was pleasantly associated with a valued friend in the editing of the 'Monthly Rose,' a periodical published in connection with the Academy, for which she wrote much and well. From this time onward she published occasional articles of prose and poetry in leading magazines, which won attention and much commendation.

Her published and unpublished prose writings would form a large and attractive volume.

In 1845 she was awarded two gold medals by the 'Association of the Alumnæ' of Albany Female Academy, for a prize 'Poem' entitled 'The Visions of a Night,' and a prize 'Moral Tale,' entitled 'Life in the Country.' In 1846 she received a gold medal from the same society for a prize 'Essay' on 'Flowers.'

During the summer of 1849 she made a collection of most of the flowers growing in this region, comprising some three hundred varieties, put up with skill and taste in three portfolios, and accompanied with descriptions of each, arranged in an essay of fifty pages. These were sent to the 'World's Exhibition,' at London, and returned with gratifying testimonials.

In May, 1846, she was prevailed upon to take charge of the Department of Composition in the Brooklyn Female Academy, under the direction of Mr. Crittenden, her former Principal at Albany. Before the close of the following winter, she was attacked with hemorrhage of the lungs, induced by over-exertion in teaching, which suddenly interrupted her labors. In early spring she was taken home, and the summer was spent in means of restoration, which happily proved successful. But she did not resume her labors in the Academy, except during the summer of 1851, when she supplied a temporary vacancy in the same Department.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TEACHER.

Of Mary Chase as the teacher, I had no opportunity of personal judgment, but the earnest words of pupils and associates, lead to the conviction that she left a most happy and abiding impression. She engaged in her work with an artist's enthusiasm, which inspired a responsive glow in her classes. In devising methods to stimulate mind, and elicit individuality of thought, she was ingenious and successful, and the tasks imposed were original and varied. She gathered selections of English literature from reviews and books, as means of forming correct style ; repeated selections from old ballads ; wrote poetry to illustrate particular forms of the Art ; brought into full use her remarkable knowledge of history; and delivered a series of lectures, which contain excellent criticisms and practical directions for study and writing, combined with forcible appeals to the highest considerations, calculated to inspire effort and courage. The depth of her religious nature was fully manifested in her intercourse with her pupils. Her labors were never confined to their mere scholastic advancement ; a holier work was ever before

her, as her heart went forth with strong affection to individuals of her charge; it was her greatest joy to feel that she had been the means of leading more than one wanderer to Him who is the Light and the Life. Her pupils cannot read without emotion, the letter numbered XVI.

The following is a brief extract from one of the lectures: 'In your writings keep close to the realities of life. Truth is stronger than fiction, and infinitely more lovely. Imagination is a priceless gift, yet, like the fire-spirit, it is a good servant but a bad master. It is enough for fancy if she be allowed to catch and hold up to the sun the crystal droppings of the robe of her who hideth at the bottom of a well, — pure, holy Truth! . . . . . It is not enough for you to place on my table an exquisitely tender and graceful essay on the Beautiful. You must note down its bearings on the great business of Life, and tell me of what use is this fine perception of Beauty. . . . . Have a visible aim in all your writings. You should think to the point, speak and act to the point, then write to the point. . . . . When you go into the peaceful country, and lie on the lap of Mother Earth under the forest trees, reflect that the moss beneath you is in every fibre a marvel, and no one can tell whence comes its seed, and that the tree against which you lean is the perfection of architecture, but none have seen the hand that fashioned its shaft and spread the vaulted arches of its boughs. . . . . .

'But one day more, and we shall part for this session. During my absence, I shall not cease to exert myself for you. Whatever I have of physical and mental energies I give to this work. Life is so very short, and there is so much to do! Let us imitate those

Who came from Chaldea's land
A feeble few,
To build with trembling hand
Their halls anew.

So with us should it be,
While striving here,
'Mid foes we cannot see,
Our shrine to rear.

Girt with a trusty sword,
Should we build on;
Faith in God's holy word
And His dear Son.'

It remains to speak of the last days of Mary's life. It will be a satisfaction to her friends to peruse the record of this deeply interesting summer in the words of her loved companion-brother. And I would embrace this opportunity of paying my heartfelt tribute to his devotion to a sister's idolized memory, manifested during these weeks of our companionship in the labor of revision and selection.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAST DAYS, — AN ACCOUNT PREPARED BY C. THURSTON CHASE.

Ever, as the remembrance of the closing scenes of Mary's life steals over me, I seem to approach her bedside, and placing a kiss upon her cheek, take her hand in mine, and strive to allay the darting pain and soothe the quickened nerves; — the sister, with whom my infancy was nursed, the companion of my childhood, the participator in all my youthful joys, who was dear to me as the light that awakes the shrouded earth to gladness.

But the privilege I enjoyed of being a few weeks constantly by her, has tended to remove the sting of death, that seemed at one time fixed in my heart. I came when her energies were much exhausted; she leaned upon me with the confiding trust of childhood; she called me 'her strength;' and at the last, when failing hopes no longer sustained the circle of attached friends, she exhorted me to be calm and cheerful. 'Be strong,' she said, 'for I have now no other earthly strength.' Through the sunny days and long nights we talked together of the affairs of life and eternity with an earnestness and composure I cannot forget.

As I recall our childhood, remembering how carefully she guarded against the many temptations of youth, and how trusting was her pure heart, I see that she early learned to love the God of the Universe, to confide in His promises, and to regard Him as an ever-present Deity. Although education cultivated her intellect and refined her taste, the silent inspiration of the field and forest was ever with her. She investigated the deepest truths of religion with even more ardor than characterized her literary efforts. Her calm independence and earnestness of manner, united with her chastened language, told that there was a secret influence awakening her soul to the clearest perceptions of the beauties of the unseen as well as the visible world. The following remark, made to her father on the morning of her death, is appropriate in this connection: 'Father, when I was a little fragile child, thee took me in thy arms and carried me out into the fields, and told me to look around and see what a good world God had made for little children; and after that, I think I was not as before.'

Mary was attached to the faith and mode of worship in which she had been educated, as expressed to her father on the day of her death. 'My father's people are my people, and his God my God.' Yet she was not the votary of any one religious sect. Her creed was as comprehensive as the Bible; her leader, Christ. His abiding presence was the Light of her hope and the Strength of her confidence. Whether she listened to

the organ filling the vaulted roof, or sat in humble adoration among a band of silent worshippers, she sought that communion with the Saviour which alone can sanctify the spirit. The principles of Christianity were the light of her understanding, and the deep mysteries of God were so revealed to her soul, that sectarian differences appeared like barriers, shutting out one portion of true Christian life from intercourse with another; each sustaining, by its own exclusiveness, some portion of error.

She often mentioned with regret that she had indulged in the common fault of sealing up so much of the deep workings of her heart. Though she had been accustomed to converse freely on religious subjects, yet she often said, 'Were I to live my life over again, I would be more outspoken in matters of the highest interest.' She felt that the time was steadily approaching when the masses would be more thoroughly educated, and God electing from them, would prepare and qualify chosen instruments for His work.

This is the 'royal priesthood' that the advancing spirit of the age demands. Then the bonds will be broken that suppress the fervent upwellings of the heart, and check the free expression of the noblest sentiments of our nature, till the glow of vital Christianity is extinct, and individual action effectually crushed. But it should be understood that she had no sympathy with the extravagant illusions and fanatical notions that obtain.

'The death-bed's a revealer of the heart.'

In the depth and perfection of her meditations upon the relations of the present to the future life she triumphed over the grave. Death was to her the fulfillment of life, not its failure. In her own expressive words,

> It is not new, it is not strange,
> This sudden, mystic, mighty change;
> To gain our life, not lose our life,
> Is the grand end of all this strife.

The light of her cheerfulness and pleasantry pervaded her sick room. Every visitor was greeted with cordial words, and the grief of endeared friends and relatives assuaged by fitting consolations. She possessed such a fountain of feeling and buoyancy of spirits, and there was always so much of life about her, that when we knew her strength was fast wasting, we could hardly realize that she must shortly die.

Wouldst thou, the friend of my angel sister, come with me to her bedside, and receive, as it were, once more her welcoming smile, and hear some of the precious words from out the volumes that she spoke to us, traced indelibly upon our memories, as through those silent Indian Summer days, she awaited in the serenity of a triumphant faith, the slow, but sure approach of the Destroyer? Thou wilt come with quiet step, not to disturb the peacefulness of her repose, and with happy look, not to shadow the

indwelling 'peace which passeth all understanding.' Thou wilt meet in her cheerful room the watchful sister, who rarely left her side by day, and through the many long nights held the wasting hand in hers, to waken when she roused, and anticipate her varied wants; the loving niece, also, who while ministering to her, often soothed her restlessness by the soft music of sacred hymns, alluring a sleep as sweet as that of childhood when visited by angels; the welcome brother, too, come from far, who in the hour of darkness and temptation knelt by her, and prayed the Father to sustain his child.

Those playful boys have come in to speak with her, for whom she had designed, she said, 'to write good books, which might be a mother's guide to them in their orphanage, and help to lead them in the way of life.' The gay canary, by the window, will trill for thee his cheerful notes, wont to waken, before the morning dawned, the sparrows on the poplar to join his lay. This is the Bible that she gave our father. 'The print is plain,' she said, 'and thee can read it when thy sight grows dim. Thee early taught me to love this book, and its teachings are my consolation now.'

This tasteful volume, 'Light for the Aged,' in her own handwriting, contains a record of the pleasant thoughts she left for him to read, when passing down the dim declivity of life.

The Aged were her friends, — to them

> 'Her looks
> Were like the cheerful smile of Spring, they said,
> Upon the Winter of their age.'

And she used to sit upon this cushioned stool, and looking up into their benignant eyes, talk with them of past experiences, and catch the glances that they had, by near approach, of their eternal home.

It may be appropriate to insert here a letter of Mary's, just received from the intimate friend to whom it was written.

My dear ——,

After I left thee I had a hot ride, arriving at East Chatham excessively weary. As I left the cars the station keeper laid his hand on my shoulder, saying, 'I've another sort of scene for you; there lies a Hudson car on the dead body of a child. His parents are at the other depot, you'd better go down there.' I felt sick at the words, but divesting myself of my shawl, almost ran the quarter of a mile intervening. I arrived trembling and faint; a crowd of people were there. The parents sat in the parlor among the loud talking of excited company, who could not, or dared not approach them with consolation or assistance. The child was down at the track; it was half an hour since the accident, and neither had shed a tear. I looked at the scene in dismay, but felt that my duty was clear. I stepped up to the shrieking mother, laid my hand

upon the poor woman's head, and spoke out clearly and slowly, 'Mother! the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord!' She screamed, 'I had forgotten my God! God forgive me!' And in an instant the tears were flowing like rain down from the eyes of each. 'That's right,' said a coarse, but compassionate woman, 'I always like to see folks cry smartly when they're in trouble. It does 'em more good than anything else.' The crowd looked on, wondering what I would do. I did what you would have done, drew the young mother to my bosom, kissed her, made her feel that she was not wholly alone; sent for a physician to bring some restorative for her, though she was not hurt, but overcome with nervous convulsions, sent for my brother, obtained another room for her with a bed, prevailed on the mother to be partially undressed, and got water to bathe her head; the husband, meanwhile, pouring out mingled groans and entreaties to his wife to be calm, and thanks to me. I then spied blood on the father's linen overcoat. Dreading lest his wife should see it, I beckoned him out, took the coat away, and washed the terrible stain. I soon discovered more blood on his arm, and it was at last found that he was severely hurt in the shoulder, which was bleeding profusely. Just then the mother caught sight of A. carrying a coffin, and sprang up in the wildest frenzy, tearing her hair, striking herself, the wall, the furniture; the husband was greatly affected, and tried in

vain to hold her. At length I summoned all my resolution, with a prayer for strength, and kneeling at the bed's foot as calmly as I could, prayed aloud: 'Father in heaven, tender and merciful, who didst give thine only Son to die a lingering and tormenting death for us, I entreat thee to have compassion on these, thy suffering children, in their dark hour. Manifest Thyself, I implore thee, unto them as a Comforter and Healer of souls. Make these, my brother and sister through sorrow, to know that their precious darling is even at this very moment resting upon thy Divine bosom. Let thy presence fill this chamber of mourning. Be a friend to the friendless mourners, a physician to the broken-hearted, a shaft which shall not be broken, on which they may lean. Come, dear Father, who cannot be separated from the afflicted by distance or time, and gather them to thy breast with a strong upholding arm, and bear their burden of grief for them, and assure their souls that this sudden and awful parting is not forever, but that their child lives, and they will assuredly go to him, if they bide thy good time, and meet him where tears shall be wiped from all eyes.' The voice of prayer accomplished what that of affection could not, and from that time they grew calmer. I thought of remaining until they left, but A. was alarmed at my paleness, and hurried me away. Tell me, dear ——, was I in the path of my duty? Like the bereaved parents in Marien's Pilgrimage, the word 'MOTHER, to her sad heart found way.' I was almost

appalled at the idea of supplicating Heaven for them with my lips, which a moment before had been trifling with gay jests. I thought when the mother was lying in my arms, wringing her hands, and calling frantically for death, what was I, the plaything and mirth-maker of my friends, to become the comforter and stay of these afflicted ones. What a contrast to the scenes of the morning. Truly, Father, Thy ways are inscrutable! We may thwart Thy purposes, but Thou will still make of us Thy instruments, though unworthy. May we become hallowed by the using!

About two weeks before her death, Mary asked me to tell her plainly what I thought of her recovery, and perceiving by my reply that I was less hopeful than I had been, she made numerous suggestions which she wished carried out, but closed by saying, 'Father may alter them at his pleasure, I want him to;' and then added, 'I have reviewed my past life with great care, since I have been confined here, and have felt, as in former sicknesses, that I was in my Maker's hands, and have tried to be ready. There is yet much I had intended to do, — many plans to perfect and execute for the good of others; but I feel that the imperfect life that I have lived shall be perfected, and all I have ever learned will yet be called in action; and all the good I have ever known, will not be quiescent, in the glorious world to which I am going.'

On one occasion, turning to her mourning friends,

she said, 'Do not grieve for me, remember the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings, and I shall only pass to everlasting bliss. Then shall be perfected the gifts God has given me, and which I have striven somewhat to improve.'

After conversing freely with her sisters on household affairs, and making many pertinent suggestions within a week of her death, she said to them, 'It may seem strange to you, that, at such an hour, I interest myself in these matters; but you will miss me when I am gone, and I feel it my duty to assist you, by my counsel, while I stay; for *my* work is all done.'

When speaking of the wrongs she had sometimes suffered, she would thus express herself: 'They were not much, when I thought of the end of all things, and the tears they brought were healthful. I forgive, — when I forgive, I feel that I am forgiven.'

After reading aloud, at her request, a favorite chapter from 'Holy Dying,' as the morning light was dawning, on the day of her death, the third of eleventh month, 1852, she referred me to her pencilings upon the margin of the book. These were among them:

'Oh, Immortality! if the sages of old, in the dim light of nature, beheld thee afar off; if, out of the agonizing necessities of their hearts, there rose up a piercing cry for Life Eternal; if their mighty souls were sustained by the faith of an Hereafter, which neither priest nor book had taught them, — shall not I hold fast my hope in Thee, live for Thee, die to Thee?'

'Though sometimes bowed in sorrow, I have striven to go rejoicing on my way. I serve the Father best when I am glad.

'I do not fear to die!
Through the dark valley of the shades of death
I've passed already, with convulsive breath
Of agony.

'Oh, soul! thy faith hold fast!
Let friendship wither, and let love depart;
But this strong anchor of the shipwrecked heart
Shall save at last.'

'I have gazed o'er the grave at the glorious portals,
Light-streaming, song-thrilling, which opened afar,
And I felt that, to enter that land of immortals
Was worth all life's struggles and losses and war.'

About nine o'clock in the morning she requested the family, friends, and domestics to be called in, that she might take leave of them. 'For,' she added,' 'I have endeavored to be prepared for every emergency in life, and I would have nothing to do, but to follow, when the good Master calls.' In that holy hour were many absent friends brought to remembrance, and parting words of tenderness left for them.

Feeling much exhausted, and being sensible that the close of life was near, she spoke to the family physician: 'Doctor, take my pulse and tell me how long thee thinks I will live. One hour? two hours? how long?' 'You may live several hours,' was the

reply. 'I will try to wait patiently the Lord's coming, but now I long to be with my Heavenly Father. Do not think, doctor, that I do not consider this a beautiful world; it is a glorious world. It is a world of God's own making, and He pronounced it good, and every tree that beareth good fruit will be transplanted into His own Heavenly Kingdom. Thee knows, doctor, what I mean. All who love God, and work righteousness, shall be accepted of Him.'

As her breath grew feebler, and her voice became low and tremulous, she beckoned for a sister's ear, and whispered in it, 'I cannot bid father — farewell; my love — for him is so strong, — I fear my trust — in my Heavenly Father — might be momentarily — shaken. Bid him farewell — for me. Give him — a parting kiss.'

Then, before the full-fledged pinion of her youth was wearied, or her clear eye dimmed, Mary exclaimed in full tones of assurance and almost triumphant exultation,

'Father! my feet are established on the Rock of Ages!'

And as the prospect of Infinite Beatitude unfolded to her view, she uttered her last words, 'Lord Jesus! Come!'

Two days after, we laid her remains under the OLD ARM TREE, near her home, consonant with her request, and inscribed upon the head-stone, MARY'S GRAVE.

POETRY.

THE INDIAN SUMMER.

Lo! the blessed Indian Summer visiteth the
earth once more,
Spreads her violet-tinted pinions all the golden
landscape o'er,

Shutting out the golden heavens, that have
blazed above our eyes,
Like the flaming sword that guarded once the
gates of Paradise,

Came the Spring, with flying footstep, up the darkly wooded hill,
Wakening with a thrilling whisper all the echoes sleeping still,—

Wakening with a thrilling whisper echoes slumbering in the heart,
With a sudden palpitation and a trembling, causeless start.

Came the Summer, like a Victor, on a car of glory borne,
With a thunder-roll at even and a clarion-blast at morn,

And a wild illumination, lighting up the living air,
Till our temples throbbed with fever, and we fainted 'neath its glare.

Then the Indian Summer floated toward us from the spirit shore,
Stoled in trailing azure vestments, such as Grecian mourners wore;

On her lip one shadowy finger, and a censer in her hand,
Whence a wreathing cloud of incense rose, and curtained all the land.

Oh, thou quiet Indian Summer! brooding over stream and hill,
I would thank thee for thy mission, bidding all the earth be still;

In thy hush the Autumn flowers stand together pale and mild,
Helianthus in the hedgerows, purple aster in the wild.

And the busy, bustling creatures that amid the greenwood be,
The brown marmot in the bushes, and the squirrel on the tree,

Silent, gather in their harvests, and no more upon the wind
Comes the whistling and the singing of the soulless feathered kind.

They have satisfied their being, and they ask for nothing more;
But the restless, wayward spirit turns its memories o'er and o'er,

Self-accusing, self-condemning, in its human discontent,
For the early Spring-time wasted, for the Summer days misspent.

Lo! the earth hath grown repentant, and amid
the holy calm
Goeth up her Miserere, her low, penitential
psalm;

And with ashes on her forehead, where the roses
lately pressed,
Hears the mass for the departed, whom she cher-
ished on her breast.

I am standing in the forest — in the sunny forest
glade;
All around the drooping branches cast a steady,
moveless shade;

Far beneath the dim wood-arches the eternal
shadows sleep,
Only o'er this little hillock doth the quiet sun-
beams creep.

Earth! a loving, world-worn daughter comes, to lie upon thy knee,
Mother Earth, alas! there is none other now to cherish me;

I am lost and I am lonely, like a birdling from its nest;
Back I come, with failing pinion, — silent Mother, let me rest!

Lo! thy cheek is cool and pulseless, — here, beneath the violet sky
That seems stooping to embrace me, it is happiness to lie:

How the low winds softly murmur out their pity as they pass
O'er this lovely woodland hillock, toying with its vines and grass.

Yonder tall fantastic chestnut — how I watched
it long ago,
When into those uncouth figures its long arms
began to grow;

Thence I brought my moss and pebbles, and
beneath this old oak's shade,
With a store of burnished acorns childish Babel-
structures made.

Gazed with wonder at the heavens, traced with
curious eye the cloud,
Heard the strange prolonged vibration of the
pine-tree swelling loud,

Till I dropt my pretty mosses, and stood up with
awe to hear
The invisible musician pealing out his anthem
near.

Then I came with classic pages, heavy tomes for childish hands,
Read them here with wild romances from his toric eastern lands,

Till Dodona's sacred voices seemed to people all the wood;
Piping Fawns and Hamadryads in the shadows round me stood.

Oft I came with bounding footsteps that befitted happy years,
Came with mirth, but stayed in sadness, came with laughter, left in tears,—

For a sudden inspiration trembled on my pallid lips,
And before me stood revealed Nature's great Apocalypse.

The unheard found solemn utterance, the invisible was seen,
And a hundred radiant pinions flashed the ancient trees between;

In that hour all former memories left the spirit undefiled,
And a temple was the forest, and a priestess was the child.

Thus my youthful soul was nourished, and the forest, day by day,
With the beckoning of its branches called me to its depths away;

Now with bowed and languid spirit back I come from fruitless quest,
I have loved and I have trusted — silent Mother, let me rest.

Heavy head and throbbing bosom, burning
cheek and shadowed eye,
Nature's balm shall be your healing while with-
in this wood I lie.

Down amid yon sheltered dingle what a saintly
silence sleeps,
Sweetly through the bending branches the undy-
ing music sweeps.

But the heavy shadows deepen, while around
the towering pines,
Wreathing mist from off the meadows slowly
creeping up entwines,

And the evening wind arises, sweeping through
the arches dim,
With a solemn intonation sounding forth its
mighty hymn.

Voices call me at the sunset, silvery murmurs
come and go,
Through the crimson clouds of even flickering
faces on me glow,

Strange mysterious echoes answer, memories
haunt me like a dream,
And like unsubstantial visions real words and
actions seem.

Still I linger — silent Mother! on thy lap I yet
must lie,
Till the lamps that watch thy slumber are all
lighted in the sky,

Till the gems thou nightly wearest glisten on
thy holy breast —
I have loved and I have trusted — Goddess
Mother, let me rest!

FLORAL.

HOW SHALL I THINK OF THEE?

How shall I think of thee?
And which of these, thy flowers,
Shall be the token meet,
To bring remembrance sweet
Of thee, in coming hours?

Not by the Vervain's lip
Of velvet, and its hue
Of scarlet, colors gay
That shine then pass away,
Shall I bring thee to view.

Not by Geranium tall,
Of fifty odors proud,
Stolen from rose and balm, —
Listening with haughty calm
The praises of the crowd.

The Trefoil, full of grace,
Bending with lightsome touch, —
Iberia's tuft of snow,
The Violet's purple glow, —
I'll think of thee by such.

By Gillia's vase of pearl,
By all that nameless band
Of tiny cups and bells,
Which of thy goodness tells,
While there they stand.

Yes — by all lovely things
That I possess or see, —
By sunshine and perfume, —
By Summer's lavish bloom, —
Will I remember thee.

SOUTHERNWOOD.

Sweet flowers to-day were given me, the lily and the rose,
The violet and the mignionette, the sweetest flower that blows;

But for one tuft of green the midst, I prized it all the more, —
A branch from that low fragrant shrub that grows beside our door.

I used to pluck it oft for her, the mother of my youth,
She said it was an emblem of God's undying Truth:

For when the other plants were sere, then flourished all the more,
That lowly shrub of Southernwood that bloomed beside our door.

'T was in the early days of Spring the grass began to rise,
The pale Veronicas looked up with their blue saintly eyes;

I went among the woods for flowers, I sought the meadows o'er,
Nor thought of that sweet Southernwood that grows beside our door.

From straying long through wood and field I
slowly homeward drew,
My mother's bended form I spied, her locks of
silvery hue;

With faltering step she slowly walked, and in
her hand she bore
A fragrant branch of Southernwood that grows
beside our door.

From that warm eve she never felt again the
blessed sun;
Three mournful days we watched her pulse till
its last beat was done,—

And for her sake, I now shall prize a thousand
times the more,
That lowly shrub of Southernwood that grows
beside our door.

A FEW GREEN LEAVES.

A FEW green leaves! the last sad remnant of
The gorgeous Summer's gay and glittering show!
A few green leaves — they 're all stern Winter grants:
Yet these are fragrant, and they speak as well
To the observing mind of nature's God,
As the more glowing tints of rainbow flowers:
Then take them kindly, take them with the love
Of one who fain had made them gold and pearl.

WITH A BOUQUET.

Go! humble little blossoms,
To one I love full well,
And of all pleasant things,
Such as the wild bird sings,
Unto her spirit tell

Ye little starry flowers,
Which on a far-off shore
Have raised your modest heads
Above the garden beds,
Bid her be glad once more!

FRAZER'S TREE.

Green wave thy boughs above the pleasant meadow,
Soft the wind whispers through the trembling leaves,
The grass untrampled grows beneath thy shadow,
And yonder slope displays the harvest sheaves.

Not thus that day when with prolonged vibration
The hills gave echo to the cannon's roar,
As the great heart of the long outraged nation
Burst with its throbbings the iron bands it wore.

As well the reed might stem the mountain torrent,
As well the rush hedge in the panther strong,
As well the leaf might turn the ocean current,
As England clasp again the chain of wrong.

Woe, for the true men with the recreant blended!
No time was there for charity of choice;
In one vast storm the hail of death descended,
And pity wept not, mercy found no voice.

Prone at thy base, among the sorely wounded
That lay unconscious of the battle's yell,
By faces steeled to deadly work surrounded,
A shining mark, the gallant Frazer fell!

Although enrolled among the hated foemen,
His name shone ever as a pure, bright star,
And sorrow moved those stern and rugged yeomen,
That such should be the cruel hap of war.

Wave on, green tree! above the field of slaughter,
Living memorial of the noble dead,
The priceless blood that drenched thy roots like water,
In that dread hour, was not all vainly shed.

For Freedom's light from that dark moment dawning,
Will yet in rich effulgence bathe the world;
When Freedom's champions, in that glorious morning,
Will hail in every clime its flag unfurled

TRAILING ARBUTUS.

A STRANGE guest in the city,
Thou of the silent wood,
I look on thee with pity,
Far from thy solitude;
For I, a woodland ranger,
May feel for hap like thine,
Like thee, a lonely stranger,
Forest vine.

We pine for the small bird's singing
That went up every morn,
A daily blessing bringing
To the woods where thou wast born;

The drifted snow is lying
On that mossy bed of thine,
And there's a voice of sighing,
Forest vine.

Thou hast seen the tempest gather
Upon the beetling rock,
And earth and skies together
Grow dark before the shock,
But in thy prison dwelling
There comes no tempest sign,
Though wild woods round are swelling,
Forest vine.

We have seen the lightning shiver
The storm defying oak,
And the greenwood monarchs quiver
As they dared the deadly stroke;

No more of nature's glory
We see in her high shrine,
Ours is a short, sad story,
Forest vine.

We pine for the blessed coming
Of sunshine and of dew—
The wild bee's restless humming,
The Summer harvest through:
We pine for the tearless morrow
That blest thy hope and mine,
'Tis darkened now with sorrow,
Forest vine.

And since we took our pleasure
Once 'mid the trees and flowers,
We prize no other treasure,
No other joy is ours;

Oh, for the forest-chancel!
Oh, for the free sunshine!
Our bond of love to cancel,
Forest vine.

Not ours the fettered spirit
That calmly brooks the chain;
We're drooping to inherit
A free, wild life again:
But oh! in vain we've striven,
In vain we withering pine,
The bond may not be riven!
Forest vine.

THE AUTUMN VIOLET.

In the far-off woods, where the wild winds dwell,
Deep in the shade is a narrow dell;
Deep in the shade, with a rock wall wide,
Mounting to heaven on either side,
With mossy drapery hung.

Sunshine ne'er fell on that curtain of green,
Though fair as the verdure of Eden, I ween,
And long slight fern leaves wave to and fro,
As the mountain breezes come and go,
Like elfin banners swung.

Drop by drop, like a steady tread,
From the thousand fissures overhead,
Tiny fountains come plashing down
On the pavement stones, and their mossy crowns
Their perfect greenness keep.

And the drooping boughs of the hemlocks sway
Over the dell, by night and day;
There, never comes the Summer bird,
The voice of music is never heard
To break its holy sleep.

There, when the Spring-time breezes blew,
Blossomed a flower of delicate hue,
A sweet, low Violet with tender leaves,
Gemmed by the drops of the rocky eaves
With fragrant scented breath.

Other flowers, when the Summer passed,
Shrivelled and danced on the sudden blast;
The spikenard leaned from the shadowed rift,
With the weight of fruit it might not lift,
But the Violet knew not death.

There it blossomed — that maiden flower, —
Holy and pure in its secret bower,
And its faint young buds rose up in strength,
While its trailing stem had a triple length,
And a flush lay on its cheek.

Saintly relic of vanished Spring,
The golden rod was blossoming
Over its head, and asters shook
Their leaves in many a meadow nook,
And the sparrow's song grew weak.

For the Summer days were hastening by,
The cardinal-flower and the dragon-fly
Together flashed by the failing stream,
And the cricket sang in the starlight gleam
Its pretty harvest song.

'T were idle to tell of the soft, low note
That seemed from that eremite flower to float,
Wordless, voiceless, but oh! a strain
The listener lingered to hear again
With a painful yearning strong.

She lingered, the listener, long and still,
In that damp, cold seam of the ancient hill;
And never a sound her ear so filled,
And never a lesson her soul so thrilled,
As the lesson she learned that hour.

She trembled and sorrowed, that hearts so few
The wonderful speech of the forest knew,
Then comforted, stole from the silent glen,
Bringing with her to the haunts of men
The memory of that flower.

YELLOW ROSES.

Golden roses! royal roses! flaming in the fervid noon,
Ye are precious gifts flung to us from the lavish lap of June;
Winds around you linger sighing, 'neath your branches we behold
That the earth is wooed like Danae, in a shower of dropping gold.

Thus in Summers long departed, your uprising, glorious band,
Blossomed for a stately presence, clustered for a gentle hand;

I beheld her standing queenly, and your branches
all around
Did her homage, casting lowly their bright crowns
upon the ground,
And her soft, brown eyes with pleasure looked
upon your sudden wealth —
Hazel eyes of lustrous beauty, cheeks with flush
of perfect health.

Summers few were quickly numbered, and when
now your blooming came,
She that bore the stately presence stood among
you not the same,
For a rapid touch of silver had inlaid her chest-
nut hair,
And she walked, with heavy leaning on her staff,
to breathe the air;
Yet there shone the same mild pleasure in her
eyes, when she did fold
In her plaited kerchief's whiteness, your rich
blossoms, as of old;

Ever bloomed ye at her birthday, and we learned
to love you more
Than the crowd of crimson roses clustering
round our humble door.

Once more hath that day dawned on us, but the
staff is now laid by,
And the kerchief's folds are breaking, in the chest
where it doth lie,
And the silvered hair is mingling slowly with
the common earth,
Yet I feel my mother's presence on this morning
of her birth,
Calmly teaching, sanctifying, this too fervent
heart of mine,
And expelling vain excitements that despoil its
heaven-lit shrine.
Mother! if I could forget thee through the whole
year without thought,

By the blooming of thy roses would thy memory
back be brought;
Were I grown so hard and cruel that I wept not
for a year,
I could not behold these blossoms with an eye
that shed no tear.

THE FLOWER GIFT.

There is a little maiden,
  Of modest mien and face,
And often does she bring to me,
A weary stranger though I be,
  Sweet flowers, with sweeter grace;

Roses and fresh geraniums,
  And snowy fever-few,
And crimson tassel-flowers that blow
On slender foot-stalks to and fro,
  And flowers of every hue;

I see them in my chamber,
I watch them till they fade:
Oh! many a blessed thought of home
To me, hath with these blossoms come,
And happy moments made!

Of my own rustic garden,
The flowers I planted there,
Sweet-smelling flowers, — the fragrant pea,
The balm that tempts the honey-bee,
From his wild fields of air.

I bless that little maiden,
With her eyes so bright and mild,
And pray that she may never know
An hour without a happy glow:
She is a darling child.

VISIONS OF A NIGHT.

VISIONS OF A NIGHT.

From the unfathomed realm above,
The holy stars looked down,
Encircling the dark brow of night
With an eternal crown.
In their pure light the still earth lay,
And wandering night winds made
A pleasant music, as afar
Amid the hush they strayed;
They woke wild echoes in the wood
And by the gushing rills,
And danced in very playfulness
Upon the ancient hills.
Lulled by their voice, upon her couch
A weary sleeper lay,
Forgetful of the changeful scenes
That shared the busy day.

She slept, but ever through her sleep
The wind's soft murmur stole,
And woke sweet dreams of life and light
In the unslumbering soul.
Rare visions of a glorious land
Went ever sweeping by,
And spirit dancers came and went,
Like streamers through the sky.
The veil that covers human sight
Seemed parted to her view,
And fragments of bright scenes within
Were ever glancing through.
She knew, although she slept, the hum
Of insect life arose
From grassy mead, from lily cup,
From heart of blushing rose.
She knew the shining stars had paled
The moon's rich light before,
Which clear and white as snow-flakes lay
Upon the chamber floor.

She felt the warm and balmy breath,
Of Summer's incense flowers,
Creep through her casement, sweeter far
Than in the noon-tide hours.
The sleeper's heart was filled with joy,
And, as in childhood's day,
From her closed eyes the tear-drops stole
And on her pillow lay.
And yet as 'twere another life
Its sense had o'er her cast;
She saw each burning form of light
Flit like a meteor past.
Again the mystic veil was closed,
Dimmed was each glowing scene,
And but the moonlight lay where those
Angelic ones had been.
The night sped on, the wind stole by,
Then music rich and rare,
Such as a zephyr never woke,
Came floating through the air.

It rose and fell as silvery soft
As where the ocean-chime
Goes from the choral-ledges up
In some Pacific clime.
It died away in cadence low,
All, all around was still,
The night wind crept with noiseless foot
Along the dark-browed hill:
And as it glided forth afar,
Like lapsing waters slow,
The spirit of the sleeper too
Seemed thus with it to go.
She saw the moonlight on the floor,
She heard the cricket near,
But 'twas not with the spirit-eye,
Nor with the spirit-ear.
For lo! once more the veil was rent;
A burst of glory filled
The quivering air, and music proud
The shadowy drapery thrilled.

Then came those glorious forms of light,
Upborne on glancing wings,
Enrobed with clouds of rose and gold,
Such as the sunset brings.
Bright garlands, gemmed with fadeless flowers,
Decked every radiant head,
And balmy as Arabia's groves,
Their fragrant odors shed.
Then over all the music swelled
Till night's vast arches stirred,
And with clasped hands and beating heart
The raptured sleeper heard.

We came through the hours of night
With pinion and footstep free,
Watching till dawn of light,
Sleeper! for thee.

Hushed is the sky above,
Hushed is the earth and sea;

Yet breathing a song of love,
Sleeper! for thee.

Hushed is the Summer rill,
Hushed is the leaf-clothed tree;
Silent they rest and still,
Sleeper! for thee.

Gleams of a world of bliss,
Such as the soul may see,
We bring through the gloom of this,
Sleeper! for thee.

Garlands of precious flowers,
With us that blossomed be,
We have culled in the midnight hours,
Sleeper! for thee.

Not as a vanished dream,
Away with the dawn we flee;
We walk in the sunlight's gleam,
Sleeper! for thee.

Resteth the heart of fear;
Waketh the heart of glee;
Dried is the sorrowing tear,
Sleeper! for thee.

Thanks to the God above!
Lord of the earth and sea!
For He sendeth a mission of love,
Sleeper! to thee.

The strain was hushed, the morning wind
Across the low couch crept;
And with a peal of melody
Afar the pageant swept.
The maiden woke to morning light,
But through the live-long day
Those heavenly visions of the night,
Were by her side alway.
The shades of evening came anon;
Again she sweetly slept;

Once more bright visions round her couch
Their welcome vigils kept;
Again the angelic song went up,
Now tremulous and low,
Now wildly joyous as the sounds
Of mountain waters' flow.
Oh! blessed is this life of ours,
When unto us is given
Throughout the day, throughout the night,
To walk with forms from Heaven!

SONGS.

THE TRIUMPH OF SPRING.

Sing a song, a song of triumph,
For the advent of the Spring;
She hath quelled the mailed warriors
Of the haughty Northern king:
She hath burst his thousand strongholds,
She hath set the captives free,
And the shout of their rejoicing
Bursteth forth from land and sea:
How it shakes the hoary king in his retreating!

Sing a song, a song of triumph,
For the advent of the Spring;
She hath called the hills from slumber
By the waving of her wing;
For the snow-wreaths of the valley
Rise the apple-blossoms white;
Creeps the grass along the meadow,
Where the frost hath taken flight;
And the forest's heart responsively is beating.

Oh the Forest! the proud Forest!
How his mighty heart was shaken,
When he felt his stately branches
By the Winter winds o'ertaken!
How they moaned and tossed forever,
Like a troubled midnight sea!
Sing a song, a song of triumph,
For the Spring hath set them free,
And the shrieking winds of Winter cower before her.

Oh the Leaves, the Leaves of beauty!
They are starting from their night,—
They are quickened into music,
They are bursting into light;
Cold and dark as graves beneath them,
They were locked in shadows deep:
Sing a song, a song of triumph,
That the Spring hath stirred their sleep,
And the leafless boughs are wakened to adore her.

Down the breezy wood-paths glisten
Thousand starry living things,
And the cloudless blue is shaded
By the rush of coming wings;
For the birds have heard the summons,
Over land and over sea;
They have come to swell the triumph
With their songs of merry glee,—
With their songs that leave no dark remembrance after.

Down the hill-slope through the meadow,
By the woodland in their play,
Leap the bright unfettered waters
On their green and winding way:
Spring hath loosed them from their thraldom,
She hath broken every chain;
And they look forth in their freedom
To the heaven's light again:
And the sunny greenwood ringeth with their laughter.

Ah, the Dead! we miss their voices
From the glad triumphal strain;
And we seek them in the sunlight,
But we find them not again:
Little heed they that the waters
Are awaking from their night;
That the rich blue sky above us
Is so joyous in its light;
Or that Spring hath made the wild-wood places glorious.

We are longing for their voices,
For their music mid the flowers;
But they swell the song of rapture
In a fairer clime than ours:
They are on the nightless meadows,
They are by the living springs,
They are crowned with deathless beauty,
They are conquerors and kings,
And they triumph o'er the Grave and Death victorious!

BIRTHDAY CAROL.

Cousin dear, I bring thee
Here a simple song —
Fashioned for thy birthday,
Neither proud, nor long.

Just a heartfelt wishing,
That this day may be,
As a blessed omen
Of thy life, to thee.

Down thy coming future
May the sunlight sweep,
All along thy pathway
May no shadows sleep.

Like the wind's wild blowing,
Fetterless and free,
May thy spirit's yearning
Through life's journey be.

Hoping is but idle,—
Wishing is but vain,—
Yet 'tis all I bring thee
With my simple strain.

And when wealth and honors
Round thee proudly glow,
Think that cousin Mary
Wished it might be so.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Blessed day! happy day!
Welcome to the earth alway!
Brighter glow the eastern skies,
Brighter glow the awakening eyes,
And a heart-song riseth clear,
Heard by listening spirit-ear,
Welcoming the glorious morn
When the Saviour babe was born.

Blessed day! happy day!
Welcome to the earth alway!
Saileth on the golden cloud,
Ringeth childhood's laughter loud,

Mountain winds in silence sleeping,
Mourning hearts a vigil keeping,
All the heavens, all the earth,
Soothing sorrow, waking mirth.

Blessed day! happy day!
Welcome to the earth alway!
Kindly word and pleasant greeting,
Tearless parting, joyous meeting,
Come to each and every one
Whom thy bright sun looks upon,
Welcoming the glorious morn
When the Saviour babe was born.

THOU AND I.

We have loved each other long,
Thou and I,
And our love has flowed along
Like a pleasant murmuring song,
Like a spring with no decay,
As we travelled the same way;
Thou and I.

We have watched each other's eyes,
Thou and I,
With full-brimming sympathies,

When the low dull clouds that rise
In the Autumn of the soul,
Gloomy draperies round it roll;
Thou and I.

Each, the hand laid in the other's,
Thou and I,
Each, the other's care discovers,
When a shadow o'er us hovers,
Sharing pillow, book, and hearth,
Sharing sorrow, sharing mirth;
Thou and I.

How long shall our loving last?
Thou and I:
Will there come no passion-blast
Blight and death on it to cast?
Lip and eye by smile deserted?
Lip and eye for aye averted?
Thou and I.

How long shall our loving be ?
Thou and I.
Thou, by wishing, swaying me,
I, by striving, pleasing thee, —
Oh ! like some deep, silent river,
It shall flow forever, ever :
Thou and I.

SONG FOR DECEMBER.

The stars were everywhere,
The wailing night-winds hushed,
When through the cloven air
A sudden pinion rushed;
'Ai! Ai!'
Came a wild and shrieking cry,
'I return never!'

The sleeper's dream of grace
Was changed to nightmare fear,
As through each silent place

Rung out that echo clear!
'Ai! Ai!
Pity me, passing by,
I return never!'

Loud creaked the untrod floors,
The bolted shutters clashed,
Back swung the latchèd doors,
The night-lamp sudden flashed:
'Ai! Ai!'
Was the sharp unearthly cry,
'I return never!'

Aroused, the mastiff good
Upraised his shaggy head,
And bayed in discord rude,
As on the moaning sped:
'Ai! Ai!
To the fearful past I fly,
I return never!'

All souls, that vigils kept,
Of pleasure or of pain;
All souls, that peaceful slept,
Heard the lamenting strain:
'Ai! Ai!
To the earth, to the sky,
I return never!'

SISTER MINE.

Sister mine,
Is the low wind sighing
A replying
To each spirit-sigh of thine;
Weeping,
Keeping
A vigil while the star-light faint doth shine?

Or alone,
Is a Spring-time gladness
With the sadness,

Hushed and covered all thine own;
Singing,
Bringing
A thrilling with the glory of its tone?

Cometh not
Into thy heart a pleasure,
With treasure
Of precious thoughts this page of life to dot:
Blessing,
Caressing,
Making on earth, at least, one sunny spot?

Heart of love!
When the near cloud, stooping
With a drooping
Of its wing, rains from above,—
Fearless,
Tearless,
With unfurled pinion flies the trusting dove.

So may'st thou,
With the heart's fire burning,
With a turning
Of the eye all upward now,
Singing,
Springing,
Soar aloft to heaven with cloudless brow.

THY LOVE.

As light to the blossom,
  As sweets to the bee,
As dew to the garden,
  Art thou, love, to me.

There is night for the blossom,
  And frost for the bee,
And snow for the garden,
  But none such for thee.

Though darkened the blossom,
  And silent the bee,
And buried the garden, —
  Thy love lives for me.

THE IDLE MAIDEN.

I SAT beside my window, my window by the sea,
I watched how o'er the prancing waves the ships
rode gallantly
Far o'er the prancing waters, until they met the
sky,—
I thought upon my lover, I could not hush a sigh.

Tell me, ye white-winged vessels, swift speeding
o'er the main,
If he I love still loves me, will he return again?
Will he kiss me with true loving, and say, 'I live
for thee?'
But on the white-winged vessels swept,—they
never heeded me.

Tell me, thou soaring sea-bird, uprising to the blue,
Where is my roving lover, and is he false or true?
And wears he on his finger the parting ring I gave?
But down the soaring sea-bird plunged beneath the crested wave.

Tell me, ye reinless chargers, whose trampling feet I hear,
Ye ancient waves, — where is my love? when will his step draw near?
When shall I lean upon his breast? when shall I hold his hand?
But on the fiery chargers drove, and dashed along the strand.

Oh! white-winged ships and sea-birds! oh! azure war-steeds free!

Well know I why ye hasten on, and give no
word to me.
Alas! my lover's faithless, his kisses are es-
tranged,
And on that hand I ne'er shall hold, — the part-
ing ring is changed.

I heard a sudden footstep, and back the curtain
drew,
A voice that I remembered well, my very soul
thrilled through:
'Ask thine own heart, sweet maiden, 't is wiser
than the sea,
For here 's the hand, and here 's the ring, and
here 's the kiss for thee!'

WHY I LOVE THEE.

Dost thou ask me why I love thee?
Ask the sunbeam why it shines,
Ask the blossom why it opens,
Ask the woodbine why it twines:

And the sunbeam will make answer;
'In the dark I cannot stay,
When the morning winds are calling
With the birds' sweet roundelay:'

And the blossom will make answer;
'Still and lone I cannot dwell,
Selfishly my odors nursing
In their narrow, folded cell:'

And the woodbine will make answer;
'Ah! I cannot live alone,
So I lean upon the poplar,
And his strength is now my own.'

TO FANNY.

When I look into your shining eyes,
And their sweet light discover,
I say without the least disguise,
I wish I were your lover;
Dearest Fanny,
How oft I say it over!

I'd touch those honey lips of yours
As the enamored bee the clover;
I'd worship you while life endures,
And never be a rover;
Dearest Fanny,
How oft I say it over!

Like some ethereal shape of air,
I'd ever round you hover,
And smooth your shining curls of hair
Or with soft kisses cover;
Dearest Fanny,
How oft I say it over!

MY CASTLE BY THE RIVER.

I HAVE built a Castle, dearest!
All its wealth is mine and thine,
And it stands where swiftest, clearest,
Flows a River like the Rhine:
Blue and shining in the sun,
Ever flows the river on.

And the Castle walls uprising,
Gleam beneath the pleasant light;
Elfin bands each day devising
Some new glory for the sight,
Make its worth all earth above,
For the Castle, — it is Love.

And the River, swiftly flowing,
Speeds its happy way along,
By the Castle, proudly glowing,
With a low, perpetual song, —
Sweetest song in Earth's wide scope,
For the River, — it is Hope.

Doth my Castle please thee, dearest?
Wilt thou be content for aye?
There to dwell, where swiftest, clearest,
Runs the River on its way?
For the Castle stands forever,
And the Stream is wasted, never.

CALLS FOR ADMITTANCE.

CALLS FOR ADMITTANCE.

[Written in 1850.]

Uncle Sam is a bachelor of a very fine estate,
Keeps his handsome house in Washington at a free and costly rate;
And thirty noble nieces each day sit down to dine
With their gay and gallant uncle, and taste his meat and wine.
Each lady is an heiress in her own good right and free,
Has houses on the mainland, and ships upon the sea,
And brings a worthy present to her uncle every year,
To support his generous living, and furnish forth his cheer:

For the honor of the family must be maintained,
you know,
And that fine old place at Washington must not
to ruin go.

Maine sends her lofty pines for masts and spars
of ships,
And loads of ice-packed salmon for epicurean
lips;
New Hampshire, quarried stone from her ancient
granite rocks;
Vermont, the silken fleeces of her thousand
snowy flocks.
Massachusetts' wains are laden with a curious,
varied store;
Connecticut contributes her 'notions' by the
score;
Their tiny sister Rhoda, so busy and so smart,
Sends broadcloths and barberries for 'tartar' and
for tart.

New York, so proud and queenly, brings the wealth of other lands,
Which her daring sails have wafted from a hundred foreign strands,
With the rich, uncounted produce of her green and golden fields,
Which the bounteous hand of Nature to her myriad tenants yields.
Pennsylvania sends her barges with the black and shining coal,
From the steam-pierced Alleghanies, which shall warm and glad the whole.
Delaware brings lots of peaches, having a rural turn of mind;
Jersey sends the costliest coaches that the traveller can find.
Maryland sends many vessels laden with her wheat and maize;
The Old Dominion gallantly her Indian weed displays.

The Carolina sisters, — one her forest wealth brings forth;
One her cotton-bales, whose contents feed the spindles of the North.
With them comes a train of ladies, richly dowered and high-bred dames,
Proud as genuine Castilians, as punctilious in their claims.
But I pause; were I to finish out the list, it would eclipse,
In its tedious numeration, Homer's catalogue of ships.

In return, he gives them each protection and advice,
Helps reckon their accounts up, and keep them square and nice;
Makes up their petty squabbles when they chance to disagree,
With coaxing or with scolding, just as the case may be:

For every disposition, from the tiger to the lamb,
Is found in this fair household of gallant Uncle Sam.

Some years ago, a captious dame across the Atlantic waves,
Who in every body's pie to have a finger craves, —
A real old busybody she, Britannia is her name,
To these young ladies' property set up a sort of claim;
And smoothing down her apron, and looking o'er her specs,
Said, 'Such a pack of madcaps were enough a saint to vex;
I'll teach them better manners, I'll tame the romps,' said she;
'Not a single sheet of paper, nor a single ounce of tea

Shall they have, unless they pay me for the right
of buying first,
And I've fellows that will make them, if the
worst comes to the worst!'

And so it did directly, for the girls flared up at
once,
Called Britannia a covetous, tyrannical old
dunce,
Snapped their pretty fingers at her, and with
united voice,
As guardian for the future, of their uncle made
a choice,
And raised a large subscription to build a hand-
some hall,
With galleries and chambers fit to contain them
all.
Of these high-tempered ladies whom Britannia
meant to cozen,
There came to live with Uncle Sam but just a
baker's dozen:

The rest were wild young savages, but grown
sedate and stable,
Have asked and been admitted since to sit with
them at table.

This favorite uncle sits at meat and carves a
dainty piece,
Just to suit the taste and fancy of each particular
niece;
Looks proudly round upon them and on his
princely store,
And thinks,—his thoughts are scattered by a
knocking at the door.
'Hilloa! Who's there? What's wanting? 'the
uncle loudly cries:
With a slightly Spanish accent, a stranger voice
replies:
'Your dutiful relation, come to pay you her
respects,
And ask of you protection, who half the world
protects.

I've late become an heiress to a very pretty dower,
But fear its proper management is quite beyond
my power.'

Whispers Madam Massachusetts in her neighbor's listening ear:
''Tis Miss Alta California, as sure as guns, that's here!
I can't say that I bear her a great deal of good will,
For thousands of my people are gone and going still
To win a fortune from her mines; however I must say,
There's few that I have heard from who seem inclined to stay.'

'Ha! Miss California, is it?' Says Uncle Sam, 'my dear,
If you please, just wait a minute, till I ask these ladies here;

Of course they've no objection, I suppose it's a
mere form,'—
But his keen eye sees already the gathering of a
storm.
'Fair nieces,' he continues, 'shall I take it that
you are
Disposed to welcome at our board this cousin
come so far?'
'That depends,' says Massachusetts, with a wise,
prudential look,
Putting down a row of figures in her memoran-
dum book,—
'Ha! ha!' cries out another, with flashing eyes
of jet,
'You need not start to reckon your future profits
yet:
If you please, my Yankee sister, I've as good a
right as you
To determine what the household in this respect
shall do!'

'Sister Carrie,' says the other, 'why what on earth's to pay?
Eat your dinner in contentment, and don't behave so, pray;
Remember I was fully grown before yourself was born.'
But the black-eyed beauty answered, with accents full of scorn:
'Go to your loom and distaff! let your codfish pedlars bawl!
Miss Cally's coming in here don't depend on you at all.
You've persuaded all new-comers, whenever you were able,
To take their places round on your side of the table;
But she sha'nt have a place here, unless she sits by me!
I'll take my things and leave first; now, madam, we will see!'

'Leave and be —— no, 'tis folly to be riled;
We've long been too indulgent with this spoiled,
unruly child!'
Uprises then a lady of stately form and mien,
With calm, imperial bearing, and takes her stand
between
The vexed and scolding sisters, but not a single
word
Of reason or remonstrance by the beauty will be
heard,—
'Go, persuade your friends, the Magyars, from
your other friend, the Turk,
We want none of your fine speeches, good sister
of New York.'

Meanwhile upon the threshold the weary stranger stands;
She presses down the latch with her white and
jewelled hands,

And enters 'mid the tumult,—with voice both
firm and sweet
She renews her application for protection and a
seat;
Ends her plea, at last, by saying, 'Good my
cousins, understand
That I come not here to ask for favor at your
hand;
Beyond your power of reckoning is the measure
of my wealth,
I've a first-rate constitution, and fear not for my
health.
But if ever at this table I come to share your
cheer,
It will be as I shall choose, with these Yankee
ladies here.'

Hark! the uproar is redoubled; Uncle Sam grows
angry too,
Says in audible aside, 'Now here'a fine to-do!

Shall I shake that wilful Carrie, cuff their ears
that rail and shout?
Or sit still and eat my dinner, while the minxes
scold it out?'
Up gets honored, staid Virginia, filled with fury
now and ire,
On her calm, Green Mountain sister, wrathful
casts her glance of fire:
'This to me? you upstart milkmaid! you may
bid your tenants keep
To themselves their cheese and butter, cloth of
mill, and wool of sheep!
Not a cent of mine hereafter goes to buy their
Yankee stuff,—
I'll be bound before the year's out, you'll be low
and poor enough.'

Silver-voiced Kentucky rises with conciliatory
plea;
Shows them what the termination of such dif-
ference must be;

Thinks that by a small concession, each her own
desires would win,—
'Tis so pleasant to be generous, what if they
now begin.
'Hush! be still! I pray you, nieces, here's a
knocking at the door;
'Hilloa! who's there?' Uncle Sam cries as loud-
ly as before.
'A friend, almost a foreigner, New Mexico's my
name;
To a sitting at your table, I prefer an humble
claim.
I don't know as I've finished my education
quite,
And my property's so new I can't compute it
right;
My guardian is dead, and they plunder me like
sin:
I've now no one to look to, so prithee, let me
in.'

'You'd best stay where you are, Miss, and wait till I am able
To pacify these ladies, and get silence in this Babel.
'My children,' he continues, 'this dispute is out of season;
We cannot drink the flow of soul, and eat the feast of reason.
You talk of leaving, do you? Miss Carrie, you're mistaken!
If I did'nt know your temper, I should think your wits were shaken.
Knock! knock! in heaven's name! pray who is calling now?
Here's a precious business brewing: I'm stumped to-day, I vow!
Go out, you villain porter! see what's the matter there,
Nor let another soul in without leave, Sir, if you dare!'

'Here's another stranger, Sir, if it please you,
wants a place;
She wears uncommon garments, and has a dark
wild face,
Says she's got the finest fortune of any lady
yet;
You can have a handsome share of it, her name
is Deseret.
She's building a big temple, and so ——'
'Shut up, you scamp!
Tell the lady my opinion is, she'd better just
decamp,
I'll send some one to bring her when I've noth-
ing else to do;
I've trouble 'nough already, without taking her
in too.
Knock! knock! why what on earth's the mat-
ter?
All nater seems determined to raise a general
clatter!'

Says a soft voice at the door, with infinite address:

'Voulez vous, Monsieur, avez la grand politesse

De me donner—' But here another interferes;

'We must speak a little louder if we mean to reach their ears.

Here's two sisters of the North, come to join our social band,

We've had different educations, but we'll quickly understand

Your customs, and your manners, for they are suited to our taste;

Having made our minds up slowly, we shan't repent in haste.

Britannia's ruled us long enough, now we'll leave her in the lurch,

For we're weary of supporting her army and her church.'

Uncle Sam his forehead strikes, in trouble and vexation!

'Good Heavens! all the world seems bent on annexation!

If these girls would hear to reason,—but when they're bound to scold,

They will have their scolding out, I remember that of old.

Knock! knock! knock! my patience! here's another!

Pray who can want to enter in, mid such a dreadful pother?'

'It's a Spanish lady, Sir,' says the porter speaking low,

'And the way she speaks Castilian, I tell you, is'nt slow;

I cannot understand a word, save Matanzas and Havana;

I guess you'd better send to her young Miss Louisa Anna,

To see what she is wanting.'—'Wants! I'll bet
a dollar
She wants to come in here, and St. Domingo'll
follow!
Keep dark! Sir, mind you what I say, and don't
let on a word
To a single lady here, what you guess, or what
you've heard;
Here's a hornet's nest already, and the way
they act is shocking!
But listen! Seems to me I hear another knock-
ing.'
Through the door that stands ajar, the gallant
bachelor spies
A lady robed in black, with sad and tearful
eyes.
She bows low at the threshold: what spirit
could but feel
Some little throb of sympathy, at this her mute
appeal?

'Alas! it is poor Hungary!' says many a friendly voice;
'Pray give her home and welcome, since now she has no choice!'
Uncle Sam then turns to profit the momentary hush;
Says that others get the bird, while we're beating round the bush;
Puts down his foot with firmness, says they may scold and tease,
But these his new-come nieces shall be seated where they please.

My story has no ending, for the end it is not yet,
And whether these roused spirits their tempers will forget,
And once more dwell in concord, I'm sure I cannot say, —
But peace to all their troubles, and Heaven speed the day!

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE FALLEN OAK.

I've been among the winter woods, where winds
are raging high,
And wildly drifting snow descends in masses
from the sky;
Down in the glen where sunken graves were
deftly hid, they said,
In which the Mohawks solemnly interred their
honored dead.
With timid tread and fearful foot, I crossed the
narrow marsh,
Where the branches of the alder-tree and horn-
beam grated harsh;

And on the farther side I stood, and a feeling, almost awe,
Kept back awhile my very breath, at the solemn scene I saw:
Prone on the moss, beside the swamp, there lay a giant oak,
Whose mighty bulk had fallen late beneath the woodman's stroke;
Its rugged head full well I knew, that once right proudly there,
A Saul among the forest trees, rose up so high in air, —
I knew it, when a little child, my father carried me
Upon his stalwart shoulder forth, the blessed woods to see.

Oft have I stood in darkened rooms, beside the bed of death,
And seen the coldly glazing eye, and heard the gurgling breath;

And a lesser feeling like to it, came o'er me as I stood
Beside the prostrate trunk of that old monarch of the wood;
I could have wept right bitterly, but tears would not restore
The uncrowned sovereign to his throne, his sceptre give once more.

I knelt upon the snowy moss, to count the circling rings,
That round the oak tree's iron heart each coming season brings:
Three hundred years recorded well upon that mighty girth,
Had passed with all their changes by since that old tree had birth.
Then in the distant ages back I noiseless seemed to go,
The sky above was clearly blue, and green the earth below:

Old storm-defying pines upreared their black masts in the sun,
And heavy hemlocks swept the moss, with foliage dense and dun;
I saw the lithe arms of the ash out o'er the morass reach,
And interlace with shining boughs of birch and water beach.
Bright flowers were nodding gaily there, and Summer breezes round
Woke up, amid the pine's green harps, a soft and pleasant sound;
The red deer slept their noontide sleep, the panther on the tree
Closed up his fiery eyes, nor watched his destined prey to see;
The falcon drooped among the boughs, the singing birds were mute,
The brown bear slumbered careless near the bramble's purple fruit;

A stout oak heaved its arms on high, topped
with a leafy crown,
And as in royal pride and state, upon its peers
looked down.

A wail rang through the silent wood — a cry of
woe and wrath,
And the tread of many feet was heard, along the
grassy path;
The startled deer dashed swiftly by, the panther
climbed aloft,
The brown bear closer coiled himself among the
mosses soft.
Down the green slope a long train came, and in
their midst they bore
A burthen wrapt in shining skins, with plumes
and flowers spread o'er.
Loud rang the death wail, for they brought their
warrior king to sleep
Forever in that lonely spot, where lay the shad-
ows deep:

They hollowed out with reverent care, between the stones, a space,
And sat him upright in his grave, and toward the east his face;
And laid his arrows by his side, his strong bow in his hand,
That he might chase the flying deer when in the spirit land:
Then heaped the warm, dry mould above his lately heaving breast,
And with a last wild cry turned back, and left him to his rest.

The vision faded, — once again, among the leafless wood,
I saw the white storm drifting wild through cold, blank solitude;
The birchen saplings bent their heads before the rushing gale,
The young pines swayed, and little twigs came rattling down like hail:

I stood up in the howling storm and said — O
fallen tree!
The relic of a buried world dost thou appear to
me!
Sole witness of that shadowy past, whose story
none can tell,
Nor guess the wild and strange events that in
those haunts befell!
In thy green prime, a century old, thou stood'st
when winds of June
Wafted o'er 'Unknown River' bold Hudson's
staunch 'Half Moon;'
Thou saw'st thy mates around thee fall, and the
full blaze of day
Into thy secret woodland haunts find its unwel-
come way;
Around thee rose the grove once more, and gentle
creatures came
To dwell with thee, where timid flowers shrank
from the sun's bright flame;

Before the axe had found thee out, strong, full of years wert thou,
For every Summer brought green leaves to wreathe thy hoary brow.

But down the white storm thicker came, and on my thoughts intent,
I slowly turned my steps away, and up the wood-path went;
And felt that 'twas a fitting shroud, heaven's wildly whirling snow,
For that old king who ruled these shades, three hundred years ago.

MORNING.

The faint ray of morning gleams pale in the sky,
Before its soft radiance the curling mists fly;
Away to the tops of the mountains they 're rolled,
And seem in the sunshine like fleeces of gold.
Each glad bird awakes from his perch on the tree,
And pours out his music all joyous and free;
The forest depths echo the soft, happy sound,
The dew-refreshed flowers spread their odors around;
Each voice that was stilled is now rising in mirth,
Each light, bounding footstep now treads the fresh earth,
Each eye sparkles brighter beneath the sun's ray;
All nature is glad at the dawning of day!

MY NATIVE HILLS.

I STAND once more upon the hills,—
The great hills, wide and high!
And childhood's feeling through me thrills,—
'I'm nearer to the sky.'
The dark pines deck them with a crown,
The snows a mantle lend,
And many a cottage warm and brown
Upon their lap they tend.

The glorious hills! I speak their name
With a quickening pulse of pride,
My cheek hath a flush, my eye a flame,
As I press their mighty side.

I feel that whate'er is theirs of light,
And beauty and love, is mine;
For I was born, on a summer's morn,
Within their sacred shrine.

The first green fields mine eyes beheld
Lay wide upon their breast, —
The first sweet flowers my weak hands held
Were stolen from their crest.
God bless the hills — my native hills —
The 'proud strength' he has given!
And still the feeling through me thrills, —
'I'm very near to Heaven.'

MY OLD DOG AND MY NEW.

Old Rover is a spaniel, with curls of chestnut brown,
And ears just made for beauty, they droop so smoothly down;
His teeth are worn and broken, his eyes are growing dull, —
They wonder I could ever have thought him beautiful;
But lithe was he and agile, though pitiful to see,
When a hungry, houseless creature, my old dog came to me.

Young Tray's a glossy herds-dog, with hair as soft as silk
And black as raven's pinion, while his feet are white as milk;
He's tall and strong and graceful, he lists to every sound,
And answers to my calling with a sudden bark and bound;
At evening or at morning, for work or merry play,
He is ready on the instant, my silver-footed Tray.

Old Rover's sad and sullen, beside the fire he lies
When wintry tempests darken December's dismal skies;
And when balmy June draws nigh sits musing in the sun,
Like some old warrior reckoning the laurels he has won,

Or growls at coming stranger; yet surly though
he be,
I cannot tell how truly my old dog 's loved by me.

Young Tray is good and gentle, he loves to be
caressed,
He leaps 'when neighbors enter' to welcome
every guest;
They tell me he 's a beauty, he springs upon my
neck,
His multitude of kisses I vainly strive to check;
When I walk, he 's ever near to guard me in the
way,—
I cannot help but love him, the musical-voiced
Tray.

Old Rover views his rival with never-ceasing
wrath,
And snarls at him when gaily he bounds across
his path,

Then presses closer to me, and looks up in my face,
As asking if another should ever have his place;
And watches Tray's brisk movements with such stern and daring eye,
That I almost fear his anger, when the winning dog is by.

MY MOTHER.

Art thou thinking of me, Mother? Art thou thinking, Mother dear,
Of her whose seat is vacant, whose chamber's lone and drear?
Dost thou miss me at the evening? Dost thou miss me at the morn?
Dost thou miss the ringing laughter that from thy ear is gone?
When thy heart is weary, Mother, and thy soul is full of care,
Dost thou think of me e'en then, and wish that I were there?

Dost thou never, never listen to hear thy daughter's tread,
And raise thy hand unthinking to lay it on her head?

The flowers are springing, Mother, upon our green hill-side,
But I cannot pluck them for thee and wreath with childish pride:
Hast thou now sweet blossoms by thee, and doth the violet's bloom
Shed a beauty and a blessing around our little room?
The birds are singing, Mother, — the birds are full of glee, —
Dost thou wander forth at eventide to list their melody?
And do they never breathe to thee a sweet and solemn strain,
That calleth back thy absent one unto thy heart again?

Is Rover sleeping, Mother, is he sleeping at thy feet?
And doth he sometimes waken as if my step to meet?
Are his little limbs as nimble, — his hair as glossy brown,
As when I frolicked with him and smoothed his curls all down?

Who sleeps upon my couch, Mother, — who sits in my low chair?
Dost thou never start, forgetting, and think that I am there?
Art thou thinking of me, Mother, — art thou thinking, Mother dear,
Of her whose seat is vacant, whose chamber's lone and drear?

CHILDHOOD.

Bless God, for happy infancy! it is a fountain bright,
Upflashing to the cloudless sky beneath the morning light;
The fount becomes a river soon that seeks a mystic sea,
Whose ceaseless chime moans out one sound for aye, Eternity!

Bless God, for holy infancy! the light of Heaven lies,
Undimmed by thought, unveiled by care within its shining eyes:

Hot tears will by-and-by blot out that soft, ethereal blue,
And blanch the glowing, rosy cheek into a pallid hue.

Bless God, for precious infancy! it is a golden shade,
Upon the dusty web of life by angel fingers made,—
The fairest, but the frailest part, the first to fade away,
And so we prize it all the more for its short, fleeting stay.

WORDS OF CHEER.

When harvests are springing in valley and plain,
Singeth the laborer, bendeth the grain, —
Whistling and dashing the dew from the leaves,
Cooling his brow in the bland morning breeze;
So may'st thou speed thee, on life joyous way,
And its evening be clear as the dawn of the day.

As the husbandman brings to his glad home at even,
The plentiful harvest the Father hath given,
With grateful heart ringing his free Autumn song,
While the stout oxen draw the rich sheaves along;
So may'st thou gather a golden reward,
With a heart full of thanks to the bountiful Lord.

CHRIST'S BLESSING.

Long since the Master journeyed here,
And grief and sorrow knew, —
False hearts around him waxèd strong,
And feeble were the true.

But once, when in the city's streets,
He humbly sat and taught,
Dear little children, guileless, pure,
Were to his presence brought.

He looked upon each golden head,
Each bright, unshadowed eye, —
No trouble lay upon their souls,
No dark hours hovered nigh.

And then he spake sweet words to them,
Of teaching and of love;
And told them of the angel bands
That ministered above.

Through strong temptations overcome,
Through faith mid trials sore,
With trembling steps, oft led astray
We reach the Heavenly shore,—

But ye, through Jesus' love, shall have
Your few, small sins forgiven,
And may exchange your bright life here,
For a brighter still, in heaven.

For as he blest you in his arms
Thrown tenderly around,
He'll bear you, love encircled, through
The conflict to the crown.

THE WEARY HEART.

'Let me die! Mighty angel, that standest before me,
Watching o'er me forever through good and through ill,—
Let me die! for the pinion is drooping that bore me;
Forbid me no longer my end to fulfil.
Let me die! Loose the cords,—the golden bowl shatter;
I have poured forth its life-drops in measureless trust;
Cut asunder the web, its gilded shreds scatter,
To mingle like me in the valueless dust.'

'Weary child, hush thy moaning! the sky will soon brighten,
The spirit forget for its haven to yearn,—
Endurance the heart of its burden will lighten,—
Where deep gloom is resting, bright joys shall return.
In hope's glowing garden fresh blossoms are springing,
They fringe the dark borders of memory's stream,
A thousand gay echoes around thee are ringing,—
Arise, youthful heart, childhood's pledges redeem!'

'Oh, well may I break every pledge that was given
In life's early morn, when effort was young!
For the spirit is worn that has fruitlessly striven,
Its quick pulses palsied, its life-chords unstrung.

When a blight on the half-opened lily is falling,
When the young tree is drooping that rose toward the sky,
Ye seek not to stay them by vainly recalling
The sap of the Spring,— Let me die! Let me die!'

'Would'st thou die, when the sweet breath of praise is around thee?
While glad voices utter with rapture thy name?
Rise! Loosen the sorrowful cords that have bound thee,
And taste the rich draught from the chalice of fame.
Forget the wrung spirit, and, proudly aspiring,
Go forth with a smile that shall nothing betray!
Bid thy heart cease its pictures of sadness devising,
And heed not the shadows that fall by the way.'

'Let the bruised reed break, and the cankered
flower wither, —
I have sown, I have reaped, — a full harvest was
mine;
And never again shall the spring-time come
brighter,
Or the soft dews of promise with fairer tints
shine.
I have lived out my day, — I have eaten my
portion, —
I have drunken my draught while the cup
mantled high, —
Oh! why should I linger mid earthly commo-
tion?
I ask not to live, — Let me die! Let me die!'

WITH THE GIFT OF A YARD MEASURE.

Measure! measure!
Evermore! evermore!
Whether in grief or pleasure,
Whether with dross or treasure,
Our cup of life runs o'er.
One, two, three,
Two, three, one;
From the twilight's veiling,
From the night wind's wailing
To the rising sun

Cometh the Summer,
Cometh joyous Spring,
Cometh Autumn's quiet,
Winter's stormy riot,
Measured by Time's wing.

Cometh Childhood's laughter,
Girlhood's April tears,
Cometh spirit-weeping,
Through life's changes, keeping
Measure of the years.

Cometh sun and shadow,
Cometh wind and rain,
Cometh the glad morning,
Cometh night's adorning,
Measuring earth's reign.
Measure! Measure!
Evermore! evermore!
Whether in grief or pleasure,
Whether with dross or treasure,
Our cup of life runs o'er.

THE WINE CUP.

Tell me thy secrets, thou enchanted bowl!
Yield up thy treasures hoarded there so long;
Pour out the poison for the unwary soul;
Bring forth the spoils which unto thee belong.

Yet more — the cup hath more! Pour forth the tears,
The burning tears bright eyes have shed for thee;
Give back the broken heart, the blighted years,
And set the weary, care-worn spirit free.

Yet more — the cup hath more! Yield up the gold
That, on thine altar, revelry hath spread;
Restore the treasure, for the sum untold
Would furnish Europe's starving sons with bread.

Yet more — the cup hath more! Bring back the
time
Squandered on thee — unnumbered, precious
hours
Poured forth like water, — tell me of the crime,
The fearful guilt, which o'er thy victim lowers.

Yet more — the cup hath more! give up the gifts,
Talents, fame, honor, buried 'neath thy pall;
Mind, reason, judgment, — give up all that lifts
Man above brute, and makes him lord of all.

Yet more — the cup hath more! Accursed bowl!
Yield up the last, best treasure of thy spoils, —
Bring forth the high, the pure, immortal soul,
Bound in the meshes of thy wizard toils.

No more — It hath no more! It gives up all
In yielding up the long-imprisoned soul!
Thy power is fallen — broken is thy thrall:
I ask no more, oh once enchanted bowl!

THE PRISONER'S PRAYER.

In the stillness of the prison,
In the midnight lone and drear,
Tremblingly I bow before thee,
Holy Father! wilt thou hear?

Though the bars are strong about me,
Though the walls are thick and high,
Blessed Father! thou can'st pierce them
With thy never-slumbering eye.

Shut from breath of rose and violet,
Shut from moon and starry light,
Through the long, long day of Summer,
Through the long, long Winter night.

When the dimmed and chequered sunlight
Coldly falls upon the floor,
When it flicks with feeble radiance
On the barred and bolted door;

Then I would that I had never
Seen the blessed Summer skies,
Would that never had the greensward
Met these weary, longing eyes.

When the calling of the jailer,
And the tread of heavy feet
Reach my distant prison chamber,
And my ear so harshly greet;

Then I would that I had never
Heard the bird-song in the pines,
Never heard their gushing music
Ringing from the tangled vines.

'T is but torture here to idle
Strength of mind and limb away,
Gladdened heart and bounding pulses
Come not with returning day.

Not thus, Father, all repining,
Would I bend in prayer to Thee,
But the human heart within me
Riseth up so thanklessly!

But to quench this fearful longing
For the Earth, so good and green,
I implore that vanished pleasures,
Be as if they ne'er had been.

Dim the memories of my childhood,
Hush my sister's joyous glee,
Blot out every bright remembrance, —
Leave, oh God, but faith in Thee!

THE NUN OF SANTA MARTHA.

Why moans the mountain wind to-night
With such a pitying shiver?
Why dashes, in the white moonlight,
The foaming torrent river?
The iron bars the strong wind jars,
And shakes the bolted door,
And the river's voice unto the stars
Goes up with sullen roar.
Mary Mother,
Guard poor Elinore!

I cannot sleep, I fain would weep,
For memories old arise,
And but for fear, and but for shame,
The tears would fill my eyes:

A quick pain runs across my brow,—
A voice I must not hear,
With well loved tone seems whispering now
In my familiar ear.
Mary Mother,
That I such voice should hear!

I'll rise and trim the little lamp
That dimly lights my room,
Perchance the rays of its cheerful blaze
Will chase away the gloom;
I cannot sleep, I fain would weep:
How loud that thunder came!
Back to my couch I will not creep,
But take my 'broidery frame;
Lend brightly,
Little lamp, thy flame!

That pretty leaf! I've sewn it false,
But what is that to me?

Perchance no eye I ever loved
Its ragged edge may see;
But some gay demoiselle may say
'T is 'broidered passing well,
Wrought by a nun, a skilful nun,
In Santa Martha's cell.
Smiling maiden!
Hast thou no more to tell?

Eleven times the pallid moon
Hath filled her crescent horn,
Since first intent o'er this I bent,
Upon a Summer's morn;
The Summer gay is on its way,
Once more its step is near;
I never felt so little joy
Its echoing tread to hear;
Even sunshine
Seemeth pale and drear!

The golden sunshine, that of yore
Gleamed through our quiet dell,
With a silent, holy radiance
From morn till evening fell, —
I wonder if to stranger eyes
That in that valley be,
It seemeth such a blessed thing,
As then it seemed to me, —
A magic torchlight
Gilding land and sea!

I am forgotten! when above
My head the pall was flung,
And heavily upon its hinge
The convent grating swung,
The few who came to look on me
Walked laughingly away,
And thought no more of Elinore
From that unhappy day.
Enough for her
Was it, to weep and pray!

I am forgotten! would that I
Like others might forget;
A thousand painful memories
Would cease to haunt me yet;
I should not waken from my sleep
To feel a dreaming kiss,
Nor drop my rosary and turn
From prayer to thought like this,—
From prayer devout
To sinful thought like this!

Tears! tears! Madonna, pray for me!
Thou wert a woman true,
And surely thou on earth did'st love
As earthly maidens do.
No more! no more! — I will not weep,
But trim my lamp again,
And while I sew the mimic leaves
Will sing some holy strain.
Oh! that morning
Blest would come again!

HE CARETH FOR THEE.

God careth for the lilies!
He guards them day by day,
The rich perfumes they offer up,
By Him were mingled in each cup,
To Him, they rise alway.

God careth for the lilies!
The subtle robes and bright,
That fit the growth of bud and flower,
By Him, are woven every hour,
With viewless shuttle's flight.

But more for thee, oh, Mary!
He careth more, for thee!

The lilies that thy fingers cull,
That die because their days are full,
Like poor ephemera be.

God careth for thee, Mary!
The lilies He has given
May die and all forgotten rest,
Whilst thou wilt lean upon His breast,
A snow-white flower in Heaven.

THE BIRD AND THE BROOK.

One morn among the roses,
I heard a small bird sing
To the tinkling of the brook,
Which with a holy look
The sky was mirroring.

Up in the eastern heavens,
The proud sun slowly rolled,
And the small bird sweeter sung,
And the breeze the roses swung,
And the brooklet shone like gold.

Then the bird said, 'Ever, ever,
I will gaily sit and sing,
And the sun will ever shine,
And the roses ever twine,
And the brook speed murmuring.'

Up the sun went higher, higher,
Towards the hot and fervid noon,
And a little cloud arose,
Wide and far it spreads, it goes, —
And a chilling breath comes soon.

With a wild scream nears the wind-gust,
Mounts with rushing wing the sky,
Sweeps o'er darkened wood and lea,
Prostrates many a goodly tree,
On the trembling moss to die.

Then it bore away in triumph, —
And the sun looked forth anon;

But the roses, they were fled,
And the small bird, it was dead,—
But the brook still murmured on.

Such I said, is life, forever!
Fairest blossoms soonest fade,
Sweetest songs are soonest hushed,
And the scene with pleasure flushed,
Soonest darkens 'neath the shade!

Blest are they, who, like the streamlet,
Fearing not the lightning's glow,—
Undisturbed by sudden harm,
Ever placid, ever calm,
Still maintain a crystal flow.

INVITATION TO THE CHRISTMAS GATHERING.

THERE 's a tree that blossoms in winter time,
In spite of tempests and wind and snow,
And fruit as bright as in tropic clime,
On its fresh green branches wave and glow;
No matter how gloomy the winter be,
There 's sure to be fruit on the Christmas tree.

We have planted one on the old hill-side,
And friendship has promised to tend it well,
Its branches are budding and spreading wide,
And its earliest flowers we begin to tell;
And daily it gladdens our eyes to see
The rapid growth of the Christmas tree.

It will bear no harvest of crimson and gold,
Nor shine with the droppings of silver showers,
The fabled Hesperian trees of old
Will have no rival in this of ours;
Neither rich nor rare will the fruitage be,
Which will hang on the boughs of our Christmas tree.

But plain though it be, it will worthier seem,
When you think it was nurtured by Friendship's hand,
And its simple appeal to your kind esteem
Your generous spirit will scarce withstand;
So we ask you to come, though it winter be,
And gather the fruit of our Christmas tree.

THE PARTING.

Leave me not now! to place the rushing river,
The boundless plain, the forest's lengthening line,
And haunts of fearful, wandering men, forever
Between thy unknown, distant home and mine.

Leave me not now! mine ear hath closely listened
To catch thy words and learn their welcome tone;
My watchful eye with childhood's tear hath glistened
At sight of thee, who leav'st me now — alone.

Leave me not now! the Spring in silence sleeping
Will waken into murmuring life again,
With April skies above the low grass weeping,
While thou art speeding o'er the flashing main.

Shall I not hear the vexed, tumultuous billow,
Through the long tossings of the night's unrest,
When mingles with the fancies of the pillow
The pine tree's voice upon the mountain's crest?

Shall I not listen to the sea-shell's moaning,
That strangely vibrates like the swelling sea,
And fancy it an echoed storm, intoning
A solemn dirge in memory of thee?

Leave me not now! the idleness of sorrow
Will steal away the bounding of my heart;
The dreams that poets from the unseen borrow,
Like Sibyl's oracles, unread, depart.

Task not the untoward future! mortal vision
May ne'er discern the secrets of a day;
Live only in the present; the elysian
And mournful paths are tangled in our way.

Trust not ambition, ever forward reaching
To the unknown, the unattained below;
List to the gentle Spirit's holy teaching;
Seek not for treasure — 'Garnered gold is woe.'

Go forth! go forth! my words are unavailing,
My prayers are powerless to entreat thy stay,
And all unheeded as the night wind's wailing,
On an unlistening ear they die away.

Go forth! go forth! I do regret my pleading, —
Go in the strength of young blood bounding free;
Go o'er the wave, 'neath Hope's false star misleading,
The star that ne'er will guide thee back to me.

TO A FRIEND IN EUROPE.

I SEND thee hence a message across the stormy sea,
A present from that grand old world I pray thee bring to me,—
No chiselled vase or picture, nor jewel gaily set,
No robe of costly workmanship nor pretty amulet.

The only web I ask of thee is such as Nature weaves,
When she clothes the forest branches with a verdant dress of leaves;
And the only gem I pray for is a modest little flower,
Which has bloomed beyond the ocean its brief and sunny hour.

Oh! bring me but an orange-bud from the gardens of Versailles,
And a chestnut leaf that lightly played in soft Italian gales,
A willow sprig from Leman's bank, a lily from the Rhine,
A laurel from the crumbling tomb of Virgil the divine.

And I pray thee bring me also a little tuft of grass
From the streets through which the Cæsars in triumph once did pass;
And when thou standest thoughtfully beneath some olive tree
In fair Sicilia, wilt thou turn and pluck a leaf for me?

And if a wish can speed thee forth with safety
on thy way,
I'll promise thee, in poor return, a dozen every
day.
May Collins and Cunard unite to bridge the
ocean wide,
And send thee back in health and joy to Housa-
tonic's side.

COME TO THE HILLS.

Come to the hills, when the May-brooks are leaping,
Come, when the violet has waked from her sleeping,
Come, when the blue-bird his gala is keeping,
And from the soft skies the sudden showers fall:
Leave to the city its false care and pleasure,
Leave those who will, to be heaping up treasure,
Fill joy's bright chalice with o'erflowing measure,
Hear how the voices of wood and field call:
Be glad, shout the streams as they dash on in brightness,
Be glad, sings the bird on his pinion of lightness,
Be glad, thou may'st read in the clouds' silvery whiteness,
As heaven's bright canopy bends over all.

Where on the meadow-knolls wind-flowers are springing,
Where in the orchard the oriole 's singing,
Where 'mong the willow-buds wild bees are humming,
Thou shalt recline on the soft vernal grass:
Up where old Kaunameek's rugged cliff 's towering,
Up on the slate, where the columbine's flowering,
Up where the maples their tassels are showering,
Fearless and buoyant thy footsteps shall pass.

The marmot steals forth from its hole in the hedges,
The muskrat is seen 'mong the dark matted sedges,
The lake's tenants croak on its green plashy edges,
The field-mouse and squirrel no more hide away.

Then flee to the hills from the city's close prison,
Breathe the sweet breath of the flowers newly risen,
Deep in the dells to the brown thrushes listen,
Hear the robin's sweet song and the field sparrow's lay.

Fleet are the black horses, fetterless grazing
Where hill over hill its green crest is upraising;
They toss back their heads to their master's proud praising,
They shall bear thee sure-footed as erst they bore me.
The Caatskill's vast chain in the distant west lying,
The dark, glowing Helderbergh, tempest defying,
The blue Sacondaga's undaunted replying
To Graylock's rude challenge, thy vision shall see.

Oh! clear is the starlight at eventide given,
And glorious the sun when the darkness is riven;
Who dwells on these hills, he is nearer to heaven
Than in river-girt city, by night or by day.
Then come, when the violets the road-side are paving,
Come, when the brooks the green pastures are laving,
Come, when the hemlock's fresh tassels are waving,
Oh, come with the blue-bird, and stay with the jay!

THE GOLDEN ISLANDS.

One twilight time in Summer,
Sweet Annie Story and I
Went up the darkening hill-side,
To gaze on the western sky.

Behind us, oaks and maples
With crossed arms silent stood;
The evening light lay faintly
On the moss-beds of the wood.

We gazed far down the valleys,
And o'er the billowy swells,
And heard from the distant village
The chime of the factory bells.

Our hearts in the silence grew gentle,
And holy thoughts I could trace,
In the beautiful, calm expression
Of sweet Annie Story's face.

The daylight gleams died slowly
From the landscape one by one,
And a vast and purple ocean
Lay where had been the sun.

Amid its tideless billows
Seven golden islands grew,
And golden vessels softly
Came sailing thereunto.

And ever, as their glittering prows
Approached the glorious shore,
They silently blended with it,
And back returned no more.

No breezes troubled the stillness
Of that strange and solemn sea,
While through the purple distance
The ships sailed silently

As we gazed on those Golden Islands,
Sweet Annie Story's head,
With its chestnut curls drooped lower
On my shoulder, and she said: —

'Thou art that shining haven,
The world that dim, dark sea,
And my heart, like those wandering ships,
Will at last come back to thee.'

Then I pressed the dear child closer,
As I looked down the coming years,
On the vague and misty future,
And whispered through my tears: —

'Life is that purple ocean,
And Heaven that shining strand,
And our souls, like those golden vessels,
Float on to the glorious land.'

MY BROTHER.

Droop not, my brother! though thy sky be dim,
And the warm sunshine for a while withdrawn,
Though the fresh gladness of thy spirit's hymn
Be for a season gone.

Droop not, my brother! Many a joyous day,
In store for thee, the kindly future keeps, —
When the blest hope shall rise and smile alway,
That now in silence sleeps.

Droop not, my brother! Weariness and tears
Are needful in this lightsome life of ours,
And the deep shadowing of thy spring-time years
Shall be like shade to flowers, —

Which else had too much sunshine, — and the truth,
That clouds and rains and storms bring after peace,
'T were well to learn in the first flush of youth, —
So shall they sooner cease.

Droop not, my brother! there is yet a balm
In Gilead, for the aching heart of thine;
Passed is the tempest, cometh the sweet calm,
Grateful as eve's decline.

Droop not, my brother! many a precious gift
Hath the great God, in mercy, given thee:
He seeth thee, and thy bowed soul shall lift,
With Him at last to be.

WOMAN.

A Woman pleads for womanhood; — inspiring
is the theme,
Exhaustless as the ocean depths, pure as the
sunlight's gleam;
We may not find a prouder word on life's
emblazoned page,
Through childhood's shining record, and the
shadowed lines of age.

From earliest ages, whence the light comes down
so faint and dim,
To these last days, whose march proceeds with
grand triumphal hymn,
In vain, upon the primal earth, the eternal moun-
tains rose,
The verdant valleys smiled in vain, and glitt'ring
glaciers froze;
In vain, the awful ocean heaved its billows to
the sky,
And the new-created sun illumed the firmament
on high;
Gloomy and stern, man stood alone, sole mon-
arch of the world,
While round him unseen blossoms sprang, above
white vapors curled;
Unsatisfied, unthankful, rude, he heard no kin-
dred voice,
Nor praised the gifts of Providence, where none
approved his choice:

The Father's lavish care, in vain, upon his head
was cast,
Till Woman, — God's great second thought, —
was given to man at last.

Open that old and deathless book, whose words
we dare not spurn,
And read her well-deserved renown in every
page we turn;
Call up the sages of the past, their classic tomes
explore, —
Her name shines forth illustrious whene'er we
scan them o'er;
The prophet and the priest alike, the shepherd
and the king,
Unite her generous worth to praise, her noble
deeds to sing: —
Here Egypt's princess saves from death the
Hebrew babe forlorn,
And Miriam sings the tyrant's fate in high
triumphal scorn;

Here Deborah, the priestess pure, the judge, the poet shines,
And Jephtha's daughter, round her sire her snowy arm entwines;
Mary of Bethany! oh, bliss unutterably sweet,
To listen to the Master's words, reclining at his feet!
Did not his consecrating hand rest on her soft, bright hair,
As in her childlike innocence she waited quiet there?
How beamed her glorious Eastern eyes, how thrilled her glowing heart,
When from His lips assurance came, her's was the better part!
Behold our Saviour's mystic life! how oft the tale is told
Of loving service rendered Him, by those meek dames of old.

Thou Mary, Mother undefiled! who nursed upon thy knee
The Saviour babe, how radiant shines womanhood in thee!
Sweet, holy, tender, beautiful, — so shows thy lovely life,
The model of true Womanhood, the Mother, and the Wife!

But turning from the sacred page, alike in the profane,
We need not look for evidence of Woman's worth in vain:
Here Semiramis rears on high the Babylonish wall,
And brave Zenobia builds her towers and mourns their early fall;
Volumnia saves imperial Rome, — Hortensia pleads her cause,
And from the astonished senators a thousand plaudits draws;

There Iphigenia consecrates her life at Aulis' shrine,
And pale Alcestis, for her lord, yields up her soul divine.

Read the fresh annals of our land, the gathering dust of time
Not yet has fallen on the scroll to dim the tale sublime;
There Woman's glory proudly shines, for willingly she gave
Her costliest offerings, to uphold the generous and brave
Who fought her country's battles well; and oft she periled life
To save a father, brother, friend, in those dark years of strife.
Whatever strong-armed man hath wrought, whatever he hath won,
That goal hath Woman also reached, that action hath she done.

Woman may wear the golden crown, and grasp
the glittering shield,
And drive her gory chariot wheels across the
battle-field, —
Build gorgeous cities for a jest, or lay them in
the dust,
Command the lightning of the sword, or bid it
lie and rust.
None may assert that sway like this, is not
within her scope,
But never Woman, thus empowered, for happi-
ness might hope:
A flower-wreath for her gentle brow, a distaff
for her hand,
Are fitter far than crown of gold, or sceptre of
command.

A prouder realm than king ere swayed, — a
nobler battle-field
Than trampling courser ever trod, to her its
spoils may yield;

Her slender hand is strong to wield the pen
within its grasp,
Or gifted with a magic skill, the painter's brush
to clasp;
Her words have rung throughout the world, and
thrilled the coldest heart,
And bidden from the sternest eye the sudden
tear-drop start.
Ah! greenest wreaths to Woman's brow, doth
genius love to twine,
And freshest from her spirit flows the gift of
song divine, —
A fountain, flashing pearly rain, with soft, me-
lodious fall, —
A breeze-swept lyre, responsive to the zephyr's
gentle call, —
A flower-feast, flung with careless hand upon
the gladsome earth, —
A star-song, such as ushered in the new creation's
birth.

Oh! every lovely, lavish thing, that may to life belong,
Is like the free, o'erflowing wealth of Woman's gift of song.

What if to pestilential cell, whose very air is death,
Man comes, on mercy's errand bent, with half-suspended breath;
There, hath her footstep passed ere his, her gentle voice been heard,
The dank air of the prison-house her snow-white garments stirred.
What if to heathen lands afar the Word of Life he bear,
In that high work of sacrifice still Woman hath her share:
Beside the couch where life yet holds the unequal strife with death,
She bends the supplicating knee, and breathes the prayer of faith;

Her voice uplifts the drooping lid, brightens the glazing eye,
And nerves the helpless arm, with strength of other days gone by.
Such power is hers, as when on high, beams forth the unveiled sun,
And with its genial radiance dispels the vapors dun;
A thousand beauties spring to life, sweet blossoms wave and nod,
The night-dews glitter diamond-like upon the fresh, green sod;
A song-burst rises to the sky from out the trembling trees,
And silvery clouds drift slowly on before the morning breeze.

Such gifts are Woman's priceless dower, yet, sisters mine, how few
Dare take the precious burden up, and Woman's true work do!

As ruler, poet, prophet, priest, it may not be our lot
To stand before the admiring world, but in the humblest cot
Is space enough, and work enough, and prize enough to tempt
The veriest sluggard to arise in generous attempt.
How few of us delight to hear great Nature's choral hymn,
That flows incessant day by day, and through the midnight dim, —
The ever-mingling chime of cloud and stream and wind-swept tree,
Sounding the chant of Labor forth in ceaseless psalmody!
Poor, pretty playthings! carelessly we fleet the golden hours,
And question not the Autumn fruit, have we the Summer flowers.

But if perchance we sometimes toil, like that
good dame of old,
Whose hands took up the distaff and the spin-
dle in their hold,
Who rose, while yet the night lay dark, her
maiden's share to cull,
And with her hands wrought willingly, and
sought out flax and wool, —
Unlike her, seldom do we ope our mouths with
wisdom's lore,
And rarely for our virtues' sake our names are
mentioned o'er.
Plying the broom with watchful care, we look
not up to see
How fair a garland waits for us, true laborers if
we be,
Like him in Bunyan's vision seen, who, ever
gazing down
Upon his hoarded dust, saw not the angel and
the crown;

We gaze upon our looms' gay work with glowing colors rife,
Nor think how fast the shuttles fly that weave our web of life;
We heed not that we sew a shroud, with countless stitches fine,
To bury our best talents in, which else might brightly shine;
Or whether we have swept them out along with household dust,
Or hidden them in very shame, food for the moth and rust, —
Ah! surely there shall come a day, when mincing ladies fair
Shall cease to don the rainbow-robe and smooth the shining hair,
But standing up, all pale and chill hear the dread question given —
Where are the talents lent to you on usury for Heaven!

Oh, mother, daughter, sister, wife, ours is a noble lot!
May we not make in life's long way a golden, sunny spot?
May we not call Heaven's blessing down upon each favored head,
And bid its choicest, freshest flowers around our pathway spread?
Whoever leads sweet girlhood's steps in Being's early dawn,
Elastic with the undimmed hopes and strength of glowing morn,
On you, what fearful burden rests, — 'tis yours to point the way
In which her untried feet shall walk, till evening twilight gray;
'Tis yours, to guide her glad young soul where crystal waters flow, —
Where song-birds send their music far, — and fadeless garlands grow;

'T is yours, to bid her cull those flowers and
taste the precious draught,
Which never yet palled on the sense of those
who deeply quaffed.
Teach her, how bright and beautiful, yet strange
and solemn too,
Is the appointed labor set by Heaven for her to
do;
Teach her, with reverent care, to lead the falter-
ing steps of age,
With holy calm or gladsome smile, grief's
tempests to assuage;
Teach her to lighten man's rude toil with
cheering word and look,
As sportive dimples glide along the singing
summer brook;
Teach her, the mission of the breeze and golden
beam is hers,
As one streams down the meadow sward, and
one the branches stirs;

So may she brighten all the world, so move the world's great heart,
And bear in every generous thought and every deed, her part.
If ye would teach her soul aright, clip not its pinions strong,
But give them to God's open sky, in frequent flight and long;
Not then will Woman idly rest, a pretty, household dove,
When fit to be the Eagle's mate, and cleave the clouds above;
But strive with him in noblest work, and with him win at last,
When all the struggle, all the toil, and weariness are past.

LIGHT FOR THE AGED.

Zechariah, xiv. 7.

AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT.

LIGHT FOR THE AGED.

CHILDREN'S CHILDREN ARE THE CROWN OF OLD MEN;
AND THE GLORY OF CHILDREN ARE THEIR FATHERS.
Proverbs, xvii. 6.

An old man sat in the sunset-gold,
By the door of a cottage low;
His soft, white hair, his reverent air,
His holy smile, all told
His work was finished below.

Children played at the old man's feet,
Three gentle, blue-eyed girls;
Their mother had played in that cottage shade,
With footstep light and fleet,
And waving golden curls.

His heart was warm toward that little band,
Bright in the setting sun;
And he said, 'Oh Lord! I trust thy word,
I see the promised land,
And I know that my work is done.

'I thank thee for the pleasant ways
In which my feet have trod;
I bless for all, both great and small,
But most for *these*, I praise
Thy goodness, oh! my God!'

Then a matron stepped from the cottage-door,
A matron fair to see;
Her hand she laid on the old man's head:
'Father, I thank God o'er and o'er,
But bless him most for thee!'

BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM THE LORD HATH GIVEN ME.

Isaiah, viii. 18.

How many household bands
With love-united hands,
Father, at thy great judgment shall we see?
How many parents bring
A costly offering
Of *all* their children, Sovereign Lord, to thee?

Alas! alas! how few,
To their high mission true,
Have taught these gifts of God his love to seek!
And stripped at last, forlorn,
Their once bright treasures gone,
They journey on toward Heaven alone and weak.

Not all, not all have cast
Their mercies on the blast;

Not all neglected the young spirits sent
For them to guard and teach,
Till they together reach
The realm of endless pleasure and content.

Oh! joy untold, unknown,
To stand before the throne,
With brow uplifted that all Heaven may see,
And say, 'Behold! I come,
Lord, to thy glorious home,
With *all* the children thou hast given me!'

THE MERCY OF THE LORD IS FROM EVERLASTING UNTO EVERLASTING UPON THEM THAT FEAR HIM.

Psalms, ciii. 17.

The Lord's arm is not shortened,
That He can no longer save;
Nor His ear grown dull and heavy,
When he would compassion have.
But His mercy is forever
Showered upon the true endeavor.

In the everlasting future
Shines His mercy like a star,
And the aged saint beholds it
Light his pathway from afar;
Light him cheerly to the dawning
Of the clear celestial morning.

YEA, THOU SHALT SEE THY CHILDREN'S CHILDREN.
Psalms, cxxviii 6.

Young children climb my knee,
And kiss with gentle lips my furrowed brow;
They bring fresh flowers to me,
And ask me for the tale I told but now.
They love me none the less because they lead
My footsteps o'er the mead.

There's much to cheer my way,
Though the first strength of my right arm be gone;
Though I see not the ray
Of eve, nor hear the minstrelsy of morn,
Blessings are round my darkened pathway yet:
Lord, thou dost not forget!

SURELY GOODNESS AND MERCY SHALL FOLLOW ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE; AND I WILL DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD FOREVER.

Psalms, xxiii 6.

The soul can never know decay,
Though darkened oft its radiant portals seem,
Still heavenly glories on its vision stream,
To light its way.

We well may envy those who wait
In meekness, all their worldly labors done,
The final summons of the Holy One
Up to His gate.

Ye white-haired elders of the hills,
Sitting at even in the narrow door
Until your shadows span the sunny floor;
Life's common ills

So seem to pass you harmless by;
As I have heard the tempest ringing loud
His stormy anthem in the tattered cloud,
Far up on high,

While on the still, green earth below,
Lay the bright hush of calm and perfect peace;—
Ye ancients, thus the storms of being cease
On ye to blow!

I see you in the darkening door
From which the evening light is slow withdrawn,
I almost think that with it you'll be gone,
To come no more;—

That with that gently parting ray
You will glide forth and silent be absorbed
Into the glory of God's sun, full-orbed,
To dwell alway.

INSTEAD OF THY FATHERS SHALL BE THY CHILDREN.

Psalms, xlv. 16.

Not without comfort pass the old away;—
The grass above them may in silence grow,
The serene heavens smile the live-long day,
The streams anear them pass in gentle flow;

But yet for them who sleep in stillness there,
Once the great spirit of the world was stirred:
In vain no lip e'er breathed the common air;
In vain was never uttered thought or word.

As e'en the insect's wing may touch the lake
To countless circles, so the humblest life
In the vast ocean of mankind will wake
Its own peculiar circle, clear and rife.

CAST ME NOT OFF IN THE TIME OF OLD AGE; FORSAKE ME NOT WHEN MY STRENGTH FAILETH.

Psalms, lxxi. 9.

'I AM weary, my Father, my strength is departed,
Along my lone way I progress, heavy-hearted;
The flowers that I gathered in youth's pleasant morning,
No more I discover my pathway adorning:
Forsake me not now in my latest endeavor,
For I long to be with Thee and love Thee forever.'

WAIT ON THE LORD: BE OF GOOD COURAGE, AND HE SHALL STRENGTHEN THY HEART; WAIT, I SAY, ON THE LORD.

Psalms, xxvii. 14.

'Oh! faithful old pilgrim, be patient and cheerful,
It needs not thy way should be lonely or tearful;
Wait the Lord's perfect pleasure, He cometh to strengthen
Thy feet for the path, as the night shadows lengthen;
He will keep and sustain thee, and meet thee at even,
To bear thee in peace to thy bright home in Heaven!'

THE LORD IS THE PORTION OF MINE INHERITANCE.
Psalms, xvi. 5.

Let the oppressed take heart,
The troubled soul be still,
Forever on his children's part,
Moves the Almighty will.
What though the cup of life
With bitterness o'erflow,
Faith in His love o'ertriumphs strife,
And bids sweet peace to flow.
'T is not by His command
That griefs around us press,
If we but lean upon His hand,
He comforts our distress.
Whate'er our lot may be,
He strengthens and sustains,
Oh, Lord! increase our love for Thee,
Till naught but Love remains.

THE HEART KNOWETH HIS OWN BITTERNESS.

Proverbs, xiv. 10.

When the pitcher by the fountain
Is broken on the stone,
The shattered wheel at the cistern
Is motionless and lone;
When the light in which we trusted
Goes out ere day appears,
And the eye can see no farther
For weariness and tears;
When the hands are clasped together,
Though the heart is stern and cold,
Like statues praying dumbly
On the kingly tombs of old;
Sweep! sweep! sweep!
Oh! cold wind, through the tree,
Thou canst not be so hard to bear
As the soul's adversity.

AND HE SHOWED ME A PURE RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE, CLEAR AS CRYSTAL.

Rev. xxii. 1.

As one, upon a bed of pain,
  Thirsts for a cooling draught
Of water from the crystal fount,
  At which in youth he quaffed,
And turns away with burning lip,
Nor deigns the proffered bowl to sip, —

So he, who once hath tasted joys
  Better than earth has given,
Still sighs to grasp them fresh and pure
  In their own native heaven;
And life no more can weave a chain,
To bind him in its toils again.

I HAVE BEEN YOUNG, AND NOW I AM OLD, YET HAVE I NOT SEEN THE RIGHTEOUS FORSAKEN, NOR HIS SEED BEGGING BREAD.

Psalms, xxxvii. 25.

THERE have been tears forever falling, falling,
From weeping eyes since Eden's gates were closed;
Like mournful sparrow from the house-top calling,
Some broken heart its wail has interposed
Forever in the universal chorus
Of gladness which the blue sky singeth o'er us.

But never was the righteous one forsaken,
Though often in temptation's meshes left;
Never from him was aid divine yet taken,
Although of earthly comforting bereft;
None saw his children at the rich man's portal
In beggary abase their souls immortal.

There have been child-stript fathers, whose wrung spirit
Could hardly kiss the sore afflicting rod,
But the broad earth his children shall inherit,
Whose onward way is pointed out by God:
Oh! mourning parent, didst thou love these rather
Than Him, that He thus came thy flowers to gather?

Fear Him, and he will love thee for the fearing;
Seek not to choose in blindness thine own way:
Listen, and He will teach thee for the hearing,
How thou shalt walk, till evening twilight gray;
Thy soul shall dwell at ease, nor faint, nor falter,
Till angels bring thee to Jehovah's altar.

CONSIDER THE LILIES.

Matthew, vi. 28.

As from its lowly mossy bed
The violet rears its modest head,
And looks with sweet confiding eye
Up to the distant azure sky;
So may our hearts forever be
Trustful, with all humility.
And like the lily of the vale,
Wooed by each aromatic gale,
Nodding before the fanning breeze
Waking the leaf-harps in the trees;
So may our hearts forever be
Trustful, with all humility.
As bends the wild fern to the blast,
Nor rises till the storm be passed,
Unfearing, while its form is bowed,
The crashing of the thunder-cloud;
So may our hearts forever be
Trustful, with all humility.

WHEN THIS CORRUPTIBLE SHALL HAVE PUT ON INCORRUPTION, AND THIS MORTAL SHALL HAVE PUT ON IMMORTALITY; THEN SHALL BE BROUGHT TO PASS THE SAYING THAT IS WRITTEN, DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.

1 Cor. xv. 54.

The seed flung in the clod
We know at last will rise a glorious flower,
The worm that creeps the sod
Will soar on gorgeous wing in future hour;
But never yet was change
So sudden, bright and strange,
As when the man assumes the angel's dower.

Only one half we see
Of this transfiguration of the soul,
The waves of mystery
Straightway across the radiant visions roll;
We only feel and know
That parted spirits go,
From earth's gay fragments to Heaven's glorious whole.

But kneeling by the couch
Where hoary Age the final summons waits,
Oftimes a mystic touch
Seems to unlock the everlasting gates;
And awe-struck we behold
The streaming sea of gold,
That ebbs and flows round the celestial states.

We may not enter in
The mighty portals whence these glories stream,
But those gray hairs begin
To wear the halo of the heavenly beam;
And nigher now and nigher
Approach the angelic choir,
Till in the morn of God dissolves life's wondrous dream.

Oh, Life, the weak and frail,
How wither all thy trembling Summer flowers!
Thy half-blown buds, how pale

When seen beside the amaranthine bowers!
Thy wave, Eternity,
And thine, Infinity,
Engulph at once our fond and fleeting hours.

It is no Bourne of dread,
That dim unknown conclusion of our days,
Towards which our footsteps tread, —
Only the final parting of the ways
So faintly we discern,
That backwards oft we turn
And fix on nearer things the baffled gaze.

Mount up, enfranchised soul!
Oh! free and fetterless, thy chains are riven!
Not a funereal toll,
But a triumph peal bears thee to Heaven:
Upward thy pinions rush
Where streams of music gush,
And lo! thou stand'st among the Blest, forgiven!

A PRAYER FOR REMEMBRANCE.

How shall I be remembered, gentle friends,
When o'er this perished form long grass hath grown?
When other love for mine shall make amends,
And other voice for mine, then hushed, atone?
How shall I be remembered? A sharp cry
Against forgetfulness my soul sends forth,
And I disdain to hide from others' eye
This witness of the soul's immortal birth.

Remember me, not by the gush of song,
Fitful and sudden as the mountain wind;
When others strike the lyre-chords clear and strong,
Let it not bring my image to your mind.
Not by the memory of the love I bore
Towards ye, the love that never shall return;
It shall not fall upon your pathway more, —
All vainly for its sunshine shall ye yearn.
Forget my fondest greetings! when I pressed
Your hands in mine; forget all accents soft,
All kisses, looks of love, and how I blessed
Your every coming, came ye e'er so oft.
If ever I have done you service sweet,
Have gathered wild-flowers for you in the wood,
Or guided through the meadow-paths your feet,
Or 'neath the forest-arches with you stood, —
Forget it! Never from the Silent Land
Shall I come back to serve you here again;
Not with vain longings would I have you stand

In my loved haunts, and gaze around with pain.
If ever to your side I 've noiseless crept,
When sickness kept stern vigil o'er your bed;
Or ministered to you, and prayed and wept,
Or pillowed in my arms your aching head, —
I charge you, heed it not! Long years may pass,
The unseen bonds of pain may bind you down;
But think not of me then, dear friends, alas!
I shall not come to smile away death's frown.
Fold in my hands, across my pulseless breast,
The page where my impassioned words are stored;
Lay down with me in everlasting rest,
The strains through which my restless soul was poured.
But yet forget me not! oh, hear my prayer!
If ever I have cheered a fainting heart,
Or lightened one worn spirit's weight of care,

Or in the hour of trial borne a part, —
If ever, erring though my footsteps be,
I led another wand'rer toward the Light,
By such as these, dear friends, remember me,
By such, recall my image to your sight.
If ever by temptation hard beset,
I prayed and conquered; if I flung aside
My dearest hopes and joys, without regret
For that which could not be, or tears, or pride;
If ever, on Faith's altar I laid down
Youth's glorious visions, passing Paradise,
Love's flower-buds, the Poet's laurel crown,
And bade Heaven's flame consume the sacrifice, —
Let such the token be! Not unto tears,
And unavailing sighs, and bitter grief,
Would I come back through long recurring years;
But as a light for sorrow's quick relief,
As a bright ray of courage, shining clear,
As a fresh hope when hope is overthrown,

As a new star in midnight darkness drear, —
Such let my memory be, when I am gone;
Or rather all oblivion: few have seen
How I have striven with a host of foes —
Striven and won, and from the dark Has Been,
Soared upward to the Present of repose.
And if ye have not known how I have wrought,
Then let my life a thing forgotten be;
If of my tears and triumphs ye know naught,
Oh then, dear friends, no more remember me!

LETTERS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The statement may be made respecting all the persons to whom the following letters were addressed, which the editor is requested to make by one of them, that a natural shrinking has been felt at the idea of revealing to the eyes of strangers the words of a friend, penned with all the freedom of confiding intercourse. No temptation would induce one to overstep the path of fidelity to the dead, while allusions to the living, inwrought with the correspondence, increased the difficulty. Yet it was felt to be essential to retain, to the limit that fidelity and honor would allow, the delicate finish of personal expression, which constitutes one of the charms of these fresh, spirited, and genial letters.

The Editor can desire nothing more, than that the task of selection from the large number of letters received, may be appreciated with the same generous confidence with which the friends of Mary M. Chase have submitted packages of correspondence, with no other restriction than that which his own judgment imposed. Universal approval is hardly expected. Passages may occur, which one or another reader will doubt the wisdom of publishing; but it is thought that more have been omitted which competent critics would say were 'too good to be lost.'

The letters towards the close of the series, addressed to a gentleman, were written in the unreserve of true friendship, and he has consented to their publication, in the trust that no inappropriate misconstruction will be made.

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Albany, 1845.

I CANNOT live another day without writing to you, darling that you are. I have conned over heartfully a 12mo of letters to you since I received yours, but could not write them, for I have been attending the dentist so constantly, with such interregnums of tooth-ache and nerve-ache, that though the spirit was willing the hand was weak. Such times as I have had, and am having! I am going to write out my experience of dentistry. In short, I have had a fit of the violent fidgets, intermittent with the tantrums, and for real suffering — go out and shut the door, ye memories of all former toothaches! And now, dear, what did you apologize for, that you had not ere this spoiled a sheet of paper for my sake? You know it offends me to have one write me for duty's sake. Once for all, if your heart does not *will* to write, do not touch a pen — do not say between your teeth, 'Poor Mary! she wonders why I do not write — she will think I have forgotten her!' Lay not that flattering unction to your soul. If

you choose to forget Mary, Mary chooses to be forgotten. If you do not write with more on your mind than you have time to say, with a feeling of shaking hands with me, fragments of conversation on lip,—do not write. That is all. Whew! what a flourish of trumpets! Well, you never mind me. Emma and Mr. Hathaway have dined with us. I'll tell you how. We were going to have apple dumplings for dinner, and them only. Just as I was marching into the dining-room with the dumplings, with Julia holding my apron, Ellen tugging at Julia's frock, and Eddy and Eggy holding fast to her arms, I looked up, and beheld Mr. Hathaway and Em. just driving up. I preserved sufficient presence of mind to set down the platter on the table instead of the floor, and rushed up to the door to welcome them. Imagine our true-hearted greeting! But there was a Mordecai sitting at the gate of my palace of pleasure in the shape of — an apple dumpling! Shades of Apicius, Ude, and Dr. Kitchener! what a dinner for a bride! The clocks were striking the noon with 'twelve great shameless shocks of sound.' One moment and the markets would be closed. Julia ran through the streets to the butcher stalls. Fortune favors the brave, and she returned in triumph, bringing captive in her train a blood-red pile of beef-steak. There was a splendid Otsego cheese just arrived, and plenty of delicious mince-pie in the pantry, and so our improvised dinner was capital. You know the rule for frying steaks: 'If it were done, when 't is done, then 't were

well it were done quickly.' Ours was of the quickest. That afternoon, we had delicious Chatham frost apples, and the best grapes in the world. Mr. and Mrs. Hathaway then made a call, and came to an early tea, which we spirited up to surprise them withal, and Jeannie came to tea, and indeed we were 'merry in parlor and hall.'

In the afternoon Mr. H. said so kindly, 'I know you girls are pining for an hour's chat alone, and I wish to get some books, so I will leave you.' Dear Emma! she stole her arm into mine, and said, 'Come, sister, let us go up alone to your room.' We went, and cheek to cheek, heart to heart, sat together and talked 'so happily, so hopefully.' We talked of the wedding, of dear, dear Vermont, of all and every of the loved ones there, then came back to Buffalo, and blessed you, darling, though you knew it not, and the tears which true happiness sometimes awakens, came and danced, though joyously, in our eyes. I should have gone up to Lansingburgh, had it not been for my teeth; but oh! dear, I will not speak of them again, even though I have some horrid poison ground into one this moment, eating the poor life out of it, for to-morrow's sake. I have a dear little story about the Alumnæ to tell you. The resident members here have formed a society, 'The Spirit of 76,' which meet at the Academy every fortnight, each sending before some pretty thing of her own writing, and these are read aloud for the edification of the girls, and a few

friends, such as Dr. Pohlman, &c. Our first meeting was last Saturday. It was delightful. The library was well filled, and at the conclusion Dr. P. gave us a short, impromptu address, most capitally expressed. The next is on the twelfth of December. Oh! that you could be here! Will you send me Ellen's letter, to be read then? I forgot to mention that my document on Saturday was on 'The Sheep!' Fact! Do you want to hear an extract from the poetical part of it? 'Down in the green meadow how happy I am. Right straight before me is a dear little lamb. Eating as fast as it ever can cram. Sweet lamb!'

LETTER II.

Chatham, 1844.

MARY, MARY ALLSTON, —

Don't blame me for not answering your dear letters before, for broad, and long, and deep have been my afflictions since their reception, preventing this delightful duty. Firstly, secondly, and lastly, we had company all the time; people that I never saw before, and old friends, and scholars' friends, &c. Then we have had a constant family of twenty-two, which, you know, devour an unconscionable quantity of bread and cheese. And thirdly, seventhly, and fifthly, I have had an idle fit, and pretended it was neuralgia. Just remember me

last winter, when the weather was sour and I equally so, and you will see at a glance that I am quite excusable on this last score.

I have written to Emma. You will forgive me for answering hers first; there was no *first* in my heart. I have sent a little poem to the Planetarium. This is all that I have done in the literary line for many weeks. How I wanted you with me two days since in the woods! It was a truly lovely day in autumn. As I was a little of an invalid, I enveloped myself in a warm shawl and sallied out with Rover. Across the meadow we went to the pleasant forest, and there, in flower-gathering, and squirrel-watching, and sweet fancies, and idle dreaming under the pines, we whiled away the afternoon. I sat down at last and began a letter to you. I talked to you, — I called. No one answered. You did not come. There were all things green and beautiful, and under almost every tree was a squirrel-hole. Chestnut burrs lay all around, cut off by the sharp little teeth of these arrant poachers, but the savory nuts were gone — clean as a sub-treasury. I shall remember the stroll long, for the fierce drought that has parched meadow and pasture, and spared only the green-wood, is now broken, and hour after hour the slow rain drops, drops ceaselessly. When shall I again go forth? Was it not too bad, Mary, that with all those whom I love, not one can ramble out with me? But I have the comfort of Rover. I shall extract from the letter I wrote you there:

'Of all the delicious states of feeling that ever cross our monotonous pathway, commend me to a woodland reverie in a sunny day of autumn. To sit on the warm green turf, just at the edge of a noble old wood, and feel the grateful glow of the unclouded sunshine, while the rustling of the leaves is in your ears; to watch the slow, rocking descent of one brown leaf after another, and listen to the quick dropping of the acorns, each with its own distinct little crashing; to hear the short, satisfied chirpings of the numberless small birds that swarm on the bushes, each bush bearing a double burden, of berries and of birds; to note the ceaseless labors of the wild bee and the ant, the busy crickets, the careless butterflies; yet neither to think, moralize, nor meditate upon either of these in particular, nor upon other things in general; but merely to exist, conscious that you are somehow remarkably well off, — and not very certain how it came about, — this is a true woodland reverie.'

Enough of this. The sun has set and risen since my sheet was begun, and another must set and rise before it can be mailed. You will think by this time that I have forgotten you, Mary, — you will make new friends, — your mind will be much occupied with your cares and duties, — you will grow staid and womanly, — and absence and time will do their work, and so I fear that I, your Mary Chase, will be unremembered. There are a thousand things to make this probable. But here in my retired home, where all my thoughts

are free, and none to share them, where I see almost no one, and none to whom I can turn as I can to her who sat beside me day after day at the Academy, and humored my willfulness, and overlooked my many weaknesses and infirmities, and was my good angel in all things, — how can I ever for a day forget you? At our age protestations are childish, yet my heart yearns toward you, and refuses to be comforted. When we parted, Mary, I lost a bright gleam that had so long shone along my way. I cannot think of that hour without tears. You were the last I saw of all, that long intercourse had made dear to me; when the door closed between us, it shut out forever the bright fairy land of friendship, of love, which your presence had created.

What are you reading? I get very little to read now, and it is not always such as I would choose. Arabella Stuart and Arrah Neil, by James. The last are the best of his I ever read; but I do not like his books, and never read them when I can get any thing else. I have been re-reading the lives of the Ladies Russel and Guyon, and very much do I love to read them, so holy, so sanctified were their lives. But I have just finished William Howitt's Boy's Country Book, a work truly after my own heart. Why cannot every one be a Howitt? Such pictures! Such a love of the beautiful! Such a kindly spirit! I went away directly across the water, and saw the daring, brave boy, in all those scenes so sweetly painted. It tells me the

secret of his exquisite writings. It shows whence spring his genius. I want to read it to you. Then I have read the marvellous history of Puss in Boots, wherein the hero who whilom so valorously pocketed the 'rhino,' appears in boots the size of a tun, a coat and pants, and a bag on his back as big as a small house, 'all red, blue and yellow, like a map.'

. . . . . .

And now I must finish this scrawl. Consider it, Mary, but as the troubled foam floating away from a spring that is very troubled at times, but may at last become purified by agitation. There has been many a bright gem and costly gift thrown down into its depths, but, alas! they never again have come to the sunlight. It may be that not till its waters are all dried away, they shall be known to dwell there. It will then be too late. That you may be very happy, is the wish of

MARY.

LETTER III.

Albany.

Where art thou this even, sister? for the dashing spring-time rain
Cometh with a falling cadence, pattering on the window-pane.
Cold and cheerless, cold and cheerless is the twilight gathering near,
And the bell with mournful tolling, falleth now upon mine ear.

What doeth now my sister? She is not writing alone, as I. Is she gay and very gladsome? And in the merriment does she say, 'I wish Mary Chase were here this evening?' I am fain to think so, for I believe I am e'en now in thy heart. Shall I thank thee, my best beloved, for *that letter*? That letter of letters, that we read, and laughed, and wept over, and re-read, to weep and laugh again.

. . . . . .

It is proposed to alter the law allowing bearers of gold medals from the first department to become members of the Alumnæ before graduating. This law has caused great discussion among the new class. There has been much unpleasant remark lately about excluding some of the best writers from abroad from writing examination compositions, so as to give the Albany girls the better chance. This is brought up by Judge Q——, but will not, I think, find much support. Mr.

C—— notified Mary Mather to-day that perhaps she would not be allowed to compete. And if he did not pull a hot cap over his head, then never did man. For Mary's *Indian* was roused, and in no gracious terms did she respond to his words. He spoke of her superior age and advantages, &c. She pointed out many girls older than she, and inquired if it was considered superior to the Academy to live in a log-house and eat johnny-cake, talk Chippeway and ride wild horses, — such having been her life, — with only seven months of indifferent school since she was eleven years old, and so on. By the way, have you seen her 'Siege of Troy'? I will try and send it to you. A capital take-off on the Trojans, and never was anything so popular. Published in four books, one a week. Trojans have bit off their finger-nails in vexation.

I must tell you about the Paper last week. I was sick all the forenoon with headache. The editors came around to me about ten o'clock, in despair. I gathered up my aching bones, found a pencil and paper, actually wrote the most comic editorial I ever got up, and a lecture on Education, delivered before the class in Butler's Analogy on Monday morning, by their long tried and much enduring teacher, and rummaged up a sketch and two poems. Sarah wrote a poem, and Mag the most inimitable, ridiculous thing in the world, and the Paper was read with peal upon peal of applause. No one ever knew who wrote all the articles, and so it went off well enough.

LETTER IV.

And now, Mary, darling, comes your turn. How does my whole soul feel relieved, when, flinging aside these sheets of foolscap, I take up my dainty french paper, and with a fresh pen trace words that your eye will see to-morrow. You will read them in blessed Vermont! And first let me tell you that I write with tears in my ears, — oh goodness! my eyes I mean, — and a cologne bottle in my hand, for I was out at a party last night, and have the most despairing of headaches. That party! Well, if my head does ache now, I laughed last night. You must know cousin Ned has just been married, and Mrs. Frank gave out invitations for a family gathering, and as I was a sort of stray sheep of the house of Israel here, I was included. Under such circumstances were we not merry! I did not dare to touch any 'refreshments,' with the ghost of my dear friend and companion Dyspepsia before my eyes, save and except ice-cream, and because I took only that, Molly came and put a napkin under my chin, where she held it, while Ned stood before me with a platter containing a huge pyramid of cream, and Mrs. Frank with a great spoon was bent upon putting it into my mouth. Just picture to yourself my helpless situation! Nevertheless I was as amiable as possible, and merely flung my lemonade at Ned, boxed Molly's ears with

my spoon, and tied the napkin on Mrs. Frank's mouth. But oh! how my head aches!

. . . . . .

It is as lonely here as a dragon's cave, and I am as cross as the dragon-master of the cave, for every child is away except Eggy and me. The very flies on the window creep about as if stricken with paralysis — and the clock has stopped. Oh! this wretched morning! I slid off my bed with a sigh and groan, felt my way to the wash-bowl in which I immersed my tangled hair, (is not your hair always tangled when you feel cross?) and crept into my wrapper (Em and I have them alike) and so thrusting my feet into some slipshod sort of buskins, shuffled down stairs. Not a soul up but Biddy, and a regular snore in the second story. So I stretched myself on the sofa with the eternal cologne bottle in my hand, and tried to sleep. Could not. Breakfasted at last on transparent coffee. Took the couch again till ten, and then with wretched feelings flounced out to lecture. So goes the time. But I will turn over a new leaf when I get home with Rover and Tib.

There is not a scrap of humanity in the house, save me, and I have grown so thin that I am invisible to the naked eye. There is not an ounce of adipose tissue in my frame. I have been reading a host of things lately to dissipate my weariness: Praed's Poems, — humorous and pathetic, graceful and fervent; Lord's Poems, the subject of such bitter criticism and much

controversy; Wilson's Miscellany, full of tears and smiles, — the most charming essays in the world, with sunlight passages of wonderful beauty; Willis's Dashes at High Life; Miss Barrett's Poems, and divers and sundry others of less note. If you've not read Miss Barrett's, do so, I pray. There ought to be a professorship in each of our colleges for expounding them. They are wonderful. I have re-read them twenty times; they are 'the fire-heart' of poetry. I would rather be the author of 'Crowned and Buried,' than of any other poem I ever read. In this, Miss Barrett's book, are told without complaint, with careful smiling and untroubled look, the deepest sufferings that woman's heart may bear and not break. She has not one line, saying that woman has a soul to feel wrong, but one cannot but see that her poetry is the result of much grieving and many tears. Truly may woman exclaim with her, 'World's use is cold, world's love is vain!' Mary, darling, I wish you could come and sit down by me at tea to-night. I shall be all alone. Wilt come? I will make thee the richest cup of Pekoe, sweeten with sugar as white as the top of Caucasus, drop into it three great drops of cream, and then give it thee with a kiss and a slice of red-hot toast. You know hot dainties are my passion.

When you think of me, let it be 'as of one' with a paler pale-face, deeply shadowed eyes, a voice dwindled down to a faint affetuoso, and a hand with that cologne bottle. Let whoever would win me, do it

through the medium of the genuine Eau-de-Rhein. Oh! how my head aches! Good bye, darling, I 'll grumble no longer, and if what I have said could be audible to you, I 'd say, let it go in at one ear and out at the other.

LETTER V.

Chatham, 1845.

Sister Molly,—

Excuse this pen, I can find no other. How seemeth thy first Sabbath in Buffalo? Art wishing to see old faces now? I am fain to believe it. Did I not let thee go away right cheerily at last? But when I came back, the room seemed so lonely! The breath of thy flowers was yet there — the very echo of thy voice. My heart was with thee, for all night I lay grieving, and could not sleep. It is very extravagant for me to feel so strongly on all subjects, but I cannot help it now.

Let me tell you of the dream I had the other afternoon, whether waking or sleeping, it matters not.

I dreamed that the whole world was turned into a great pickle-pot! And the contents thereof were various. There was a vast number of cucumbers packed in, helter-skelter, and of all sorts and sizes. Some had evidently grown in the sunshine and honey-dew, and had been nourished in the choicest part of the garden,

while others, dwarfed, crooked and distorted, showed that under the congenial shade of some mighty pig-weed they had striven in vain for life, for the drop and the ray. There had the parent vine withered and dried away, leaving this unsavory and blighted fruit. Here and there were bestowed great mangoes, on whom had been lavished the care of the chief cook. They had been endowed with the costliest spices, and filled with the richest culinary treasures. They had been carefully guarded and wrapped from all harm, and like whales among small fish, lay in the immense extent of vinegar; and a few golden and crimson tomatoes shone out among their humble neighbors. I seized an enormous pudding-stick and stirred the pickle-pot, and from it arose so sweet an odor that I was fain to empty the contents. There was a thick sediment, wherein were imbedded shrunken radish-pods, shrivelled peppers, half dissolved cloves, and softened mustard-seeds, now forgotten and neglected, but who had given the essence of life to flavor those above them, which, without it, would have been tasteless and useless. Here the dream ended, but I had quite a moral from it all to myself.

Monday morn. I am going to the 'Corners' soon with father, and then will make garden the rest of the day with Dick. Such a wreath of fragrant blossoms as I have been twining would do you good to see. It is sunny and still, and a presence of glory rests on the old hill-side, and sweet thoughts are awakened as I

gaze around. Write to me soon, Mary. Tell me all that is in thine heart to say, and tell me, too, what classes thee has. Excuse this hurried sheet, as I am going to carry it to the office now, and believe me thine own MARY.

LETTER VI.

Chatham, New Year's Evening.

DEAREST A., —

Dead and gone! dead and gone! never more canst thou come back to us, poor old year! What brave promises were thine, what weak fulfillments! There were violets that the night frosts withered; there were orchard blooms where never came fruit; there were rosy morning clouds that grew into tempests, and dews that congealed into hail; there were fancies that shrunk into nothingness before cold realities; there were hopes and plans and endeavors without fruition; there were loves that ended in hatred, and good intentions that froze into hardness of heart. Shall we lament thee, then, dead deceiver, hollow professor? Let us rejoice that thou art gone. But were no good movings in thy heart toward us? Did thou really bring us no positive blessings? Sunshine made every day a glory; winds swept away the deforming tempests from the sky; some desires were gratified; some good will was transformed into action; and if we remember

that during the whole time that thou wert with us, God did not once forget us, we have much to be grateful for. Let us, then, stand on thy grave with holy thoughts, and, forgiving all thy short-comings, like a true friend, bury in oblivion that thou hadst not, and cherish that thou hadst.

This morning I rose as the east began to brighten, and well defended from the cold, stepped softly out of doors. Slowly the earth was turning towards the sun, and those rays which for more than three hundred days had been streaming silently down on her viewless pathway, enlightening no human vision, commenced to invest the dark winter woods with radiance. On what other world had those ever-shining beams fallen? Was there suffering there? Did any weep or pray? These things we know not, but we know that there was surely a God there, wherever that world might be.

Whatever of evil may grow spontaneously in my heart, there was none there this morning. Perhaps the frost destroyed it for the time, as it is said to destroy malignant diseases of the body. This morning I freely forgave all injuries, repented of all sin, loved all the world, desired to do good, and felt so ardent a love for God, so vehement a desire to do something to advance His glory here, to make His goodness appear, that Moses was scarcely more transfigured on the Mount than I. But as Moses fell into great transgression immediately after this event, so have I, even

before the sun set, fallen into sin. Oh! how full was my soul of happiness as I traversed the snowy way up the hills. At last I came to a bleak spot, where the brown and furrowed face of dear mother Earth was visible, and my heart warmed towards her, old but unworn pilgrim of countless eternities! I could have kissed her beloved forehead in my all-embracing mood. There in the roaring wind, that swept out of the woods laden with the new year greetings of the lofty oaks and pines to the departing stars, I bared my head, and standing before God, offered a prayer to Him for myself, for that parent Earth, and for all she nourished. My supplication had no voice, yet Faith knew well that it sounded louder in the ear of the Eternal than the rushing of that mountain-wind. How world-wide were my sympathies! God, who did put in my heart so full a prayer, Thou hast not forgotten it! There I prayed also for thee, truest of friends! there I acknowledged my unworthiness of thy love.

When I came down from the hill, I felt as if I had stood on the Pisgah, beholding the promised land, and was now about to pass over and take possession. My faith and hope have been inexpressibly strengthened since then. I have found self-control easier, denials of no account, and disappointment not worth reckoning. I wonder if such scenes often occur to those who ardently seek for truth. Even if I never experience such exalted sentiments again, I shall still feel that I have not lived without sufficient happiness.

LETTER VII.

Dear A., —

Another dawn, dear Miss ——, and then you will look with me upon our mountains and forests. Another eve, and you will listen with me to the evening song of our robin, and feel the cool night winds murmuring back the shining hair from your forehead, which I have so loved to arrange. The pine on the hill-top shall speak to its fellow on the plain, and thou shalt hear the strangely sweet voice, and know what it saith. Thou shalt hear the mournful echoes that ring through the woods in the dim twilight, and look on the shadowy mists creeping up from the low meadows.

These are some of my pleasures in the country. I cannot offer thee splendid sights *within* doors, but *without* there is that which I am sure will be to thee, as it has been to me, very beautiful. I only hope thou wilt not be so wearied with thy manifold duties before leaving the city, that thou wilt not be in a mood to relish those pleasant scenes. Excuse these words written in extreme haste. 'T were better thus than forgotten. Many thanks for the lines of remembrance from thee yesterday.

LETTER VIII.

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Dear A.,—

I earnestly desire to live to please God, and to enter into his rest as soon as he is willing to call me home; though I do so long, so to speak, for that glorious country, where tears shall be wiped from all eyes, where my spirit, fettered here in its best attempts, falling short of the aim in its highest flights, can complete every endeavor, perfect every design. Yet I constantly think, shall I not be able there in some way to serve those I have left behind me? Must this desire, surely a right one, because commanded of God and practised by Christ, be prevented from accomplishment in another world? We can often, almost always, serve those we love; must it be that in heaven, divested of our hindrances of flesh and its attendant infirmities, we can no longer cheer and benefit our friends? All is darkness, and yet some hope, and in this hope I abide.

As it is generally thought that, in view of the near approach of death, our hearts are purged of their common sins, and we are made more fit to enter into the communion of the saints, so I have seized upon such occasions, when they have, as you know, been presented to me, as most auspicious opportunities to offer up my friends' names as candidates for Heaven's peculiar favors, and as they were sincerely proffered, so I hope they were accepted. Am I to believe that

God has ever heard and granted my prayers? And if so, what were denied and what received? Where I have prayed through years and years for the salvation of an immortal soul, am I to hope it has been of efficacy, or no? If so, I have nothing else to desire. For myself, I desire no earthly gratification, no pleasure, no exemption from pain. I never pray for these. There are but four things I need to make me happy, and three of them are unnecessary, — a competence, friendship, love, and faith in God. Wealth may depart like the dew of the morning, friendship may be poisoned, love may die; but oh! my soul, hold fast thy faith in God, and thou shalt yet be supremely blessed!

LETTER IX.

My dear A., —

Do you not remember that Kames places among his sources of happiness, cessation from bodily pain? Until to-day that remark was a dead letter to me. I am so perfectly happy in freedom from the toothache, that I appreciate his remark truly. You asked me to tell you what were my emotions on reading Tennyson's Poems. I cannot. I have read many of them, and felt 'lifted out of myself.' They are too exquisitely fashioned to admit of criticism; like the great butterflies, pale, green and violet, and snow-white, that I caught years ago, and in the catching, destroyed. So

fragile were they, so fairly tinted, that I must e'en be content to look up and wonder at their perfection, nor put fingers on their wings.

The night before last, as I sat all night by the parlor fire, or lay on the floor in ecstasy of pain, will you believe it, those beautiful poems staid alway in my mind? I thought they meant to comfort me, and I welcomed them. How that one stanza thrilled me, —

'All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call;
'T was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all;
The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.'

I intend to copy out divers and sundries of these poems, so that I may have them when I go home. 'Mariana in the South' seems to me to furnish one of the most vivid pictures of the effect of a long continued drought that I ever saw. One almost feels with her how from 'heat to heat the day increased,' and sees the 'one black shadow on the wall' warp slowly round from west to east.

I am so well to-day that I promise myself the pleasure of coming to see you by-and-by. I hope you are having a pleasant morning of housekeeping.

LETTER X.

My dear A., —

I have been enraged at a criticism on Mrs. Hemans in one of the magazines. I prize the clear 'ring' of Mrs. H.'s versification more than all the love, duty, progress, and moral suasion of all the new school of poets. Verily, now-a-days, 'the poor' we have with us always. When I open a volume of poems, I prefer to find a digression from the ordinary talk of this tow-cloth and checked-apron-wearing world, to reading wearily through rhythmical sermons and Dorcas Society addresses in verse. Do good with all your might, fervently, effectually, thoroughly, but do not talk about it all the time, — at least do not make poetry the vehicle in which you go about to trumpet your deeds. Alas, the old triumphal chariot, with its laurels, its milk-white steeds, and the clarion blast that heralded it, is turned into a Connecticut pedler's wagon, with iron candlesticks, brooms, and patent medicines inside, while a big tin dinner-horn announces its approach. The Muses have become Sisters of Charity, and tramp about with big baskets of clothes and phials. Mars is in jail for fighting a duel, and Bacchus has had the delirium tremens. Nimble-footed Mercury goes around with subscription papers. Venus has been sent to 'the bettering house.' The Graces have put on high-necked dresses, and write for the magazines. Juno

manages an Orphan Asylum, and Jupiter has gone to Congress to legislate for reform, progress, and woman's rights. Alas, for the good old times!

You expect me to say something about the Pulpit Portraits in Holden. I have only read the last two numbers, but was much pleased with the vigor, freshness, and animation of the sketches. There are some 'countrified' expressions that are in admirable contrast to the smooth, polished, and senseless diction of most magazine papers of that class. I shall get the rest and read them. You see I put in no detracting 'but.' The truth is, I have not had time to find fault with them; so I cannot judge whether there be any faults or no.

With my myriad duties, I still find time to write a little. I have undertaken a task which you may think will poorly repay me. It is the life of my father. You know it is not an eventful one, but I think any one like —— —— might make something interesting or instructive out of it. I mean to fill out this sheet with a poem. I composed it lately, while engaged in distracting employments. It is entitled 'A Prayer for Remembrance.' From

MARY.

LETTER XI.

My dear A, —

Tell Anna I shall answer her letter soon. Although it was brief, it did the heavenly office of increasing and strengthening the love of two absent friends. Is either of the Cadys there? If so, tell them I have not forgotten one flower of the beautiful bouquet that, through its sweet breath and tasteful arrangement, kept me in mind of them all the way home. Not a sparrow's worth of kindness which I ever received there has fallen to the ground; it even now warms my heart to think of it. Of all books, what do you suppose I have just been reading? For the first time completely, Allan Ramsay's 'Gentle Shepherd,' the pearl of comedies. When summer comes I shall more fully appreciate it, as all those pastorals seem rather imaginative when the 'burnies wimplin o'er the stanes' are silent and fast-bound — when the 'heathery knowes' are clean buried out of sight, and Roger tuning his flute on upland braes, among his sheep, to Jenny washing 'cloes' in the pool Halbres How, are hardly supposable cases. What a pity there are not more Sir William Worthys! What a pity that so many of us are able to say with Ramsay, that we

'Laugh when we're sad, speak when we've nought to say,
And for the fashion, when we're blithe, seem wae.'

When spring comes, I shall carry The Gentle Shepherd, Walton's Complete Angler, and Cotton's condemnation of it, into the country, and trust nothing will 'cross my pastoral mood.' Speaking of pastorals reminds me of a passage in one of Praed's poems that I was reading last night, that amazed me, where Vidal turns sentimental and goes into the country — 'He lay beside a rivulet and looked beside himself.' Is n't it good? Also — 'Three days he supped upon dry fruit, and lay upon wet grass.' At last, finding 'There's nothing like a rattling ride for curing melancholy,' he sat out one day in pursuit of adventures, 'with a long, dull journey all before, and a short, gay squire behind him.' But this is not the place to commence quoting from Praed, for one will never be done. I have been reading Headley's Washington and his Generals, and am greatly disappointed in it. It is too hastily written, too partisan in its character to be trusted, too full of repetition, too warlike in its spirit, and too desultory and unconnected. With two noble exceptions, Greene's retreat through the Carolinas, and Paul Jones's fight with the Serapis, they are worthy the author, and too good for the book. You or I or John Smith could have made as good a collection of sketches. The portraits, too, I do not hesitate to pronounce worthless, as the great similarity between them and their total want of character show. The last surviving character in that terrible combat with the Serapis, is my relative, Francis Chase, of ———, Maine,

one of the hundred men of that name who served as privates in the continental army, scarce one of whom returned to their homes. I have no desire to read Napoleon and his Marshals. Battle scenes are not to my taste, and the reason why I like this description of the sea-fight, is because the dreadful particulars of the scene are merged in its accompaniments. The beautiful moon-light, the still ocean, the smoke, the thunder, the reeling ships, the booming guns, the final upspringing and down plunging of the *dying* ship. How the blood flowed, how the poor maimed wretches groaned, how the spectators shrieked and wrung their hands, is not told.

In reading the last number of 'Dombey and Son,' I have come to the conclusion that 'The Battle of Life' was merely a preface to this great work. The two first pages of that story would be quite as applicable to this. I think that it was made humble and unpretending, purposely to prepare the way for this. The title belongs to it. Is it not 'the Battle of Life' emphatically? That secret contains all the interest of the tale. It is not the circumstances, but the inward strife and struggle of the actors that enchain us. Mrs. Dombey is introduced as just passing away from the great battle. What her life was we are at liberty to guess. People are selected from all the walks of life, in all possible variety of circumstances, at all ages. There are foes within and without — ambushes, treachery, the might that maketh right, the retreat, the flight,

the pursuit. There are death cries and struggles, and hopeless charges and forlorn hopes; and there, too, are innocence secure amid a thousand perils, simplicity, faith, and love more mighty than gold or chains, and true worth will assuredly be at last victor.

I inclose this little poem, which I beg you will seal after reading, and send. I know there is not a word of truth in it, and were I 'not permanently withdrawn into solid darkness,' I should not dare. You will say I have wonderfully depreciated, and it is true. With a heart full of love, MARY.

More flowers, more beauty in my path,
More light along my way;
A deeper hue the sunshine hath,
A richer glow the day;
And every breeze that sweepeth by,
Speaks with a gayer tone,
And beareth with it perfumes rare,
Which these sweet flowers have strewn.

Ay, bring them forth into the sun;
They were not born to be
Hidden away from mortal eyes,
That joy such flowers to see.
Bring crystal water-drops to fling,
Like pearls upon each leaf;
So let them rest in yonder vase,
A green and golden sheaf.

Father! who gavest these gems to shine,
These buds in bliss to grow,
What must adorn Thy courts above,
If such are found below?

They say that there e'en rainbow hues
Are pale and dim to see ;
Then what, oh Father ! dyes *Thy* flowers ?
What must their radiance be ?

LETTER XII.

Chatham, 1846.

Dear A.,—

Do not suppose from the small size of my sheet that I have not much to say to you, only so little time just now. As the merchants say appeasingly, I 'shall have more soon.' How good was your letter to me ! I was getting restless, that I did not hear from you ; and when the last hours of daylight were dying out of the sky, I used to go away by myself, and, like Cowper's cat, 'sit and think,' for it was at such times that your ring came oftenest at the door, and then I most missed your company.

Ah ! you found time and strength amid all your illness to write to me, and send me so delightful a package. I sat up late last night to read the 'Cricket on the Hearth,' and the next day read it to E., who was as charmed with it as I. What an original story it is ! Tilly Slowboy and that young Perrybringle, Dot and the Carrier, the Kettle and the Cricket, all seemed to vie with each other in content and household happiness. All through the pages I trembled for the 'baby's' life.

Tilly was so careless, I constantly echoed Dot's caution, 'Whatever else you do, do not let him fall under the grate.' Do you believe that Tackleton really changed and became the loveable being that Bertha supposed him? And did he make their old home happy? I wish I knew.

You ask me the sequel of the story of the New Jersey guest. There is none. People are always coming and going here. You know we keep open house. Have I told you of the bountiful feast of which I have been partaking? Miss Strickland's Queens of England, followed by three volumes of old English metrical romances, rendered in modern prose, and a great book of Froissart, which was bought for me at a book auction, where I saw it advertised. You should read some of these romances before you read Tennyson's Morte D'Arthur, The Lady of Shalott, Sir Galahad, and Sir Launcelot, for the foundation of them all are here; especially the sweet, plaintive story of The Lady, which differs somewhat from the original.

LETTER XIII.

My dear A.,—

I think my former indulgence in writing so much was a great disadvantage to me. I poured forth my vivid imaginings and sudden emotions without having duly

considered their import, and sifted the wheat from the chaff. I thought much but hastily, and waited not to digest the impressions that swept over my mind like the changing winds. Now I keep my best thoughts to myself; I do not yet trust them away from me in their infancy. Perhaps they may wither and die in their prison; I can afford to lose a few for the sake of the others. I do not know that I shall ever attempt to write well again, but I feel that if the physical machinery were properly adjusted, the hand that strikes the wires would be steadier than of yore, and stronger by rest.

I am not like Fouque's 'Old Man of the Mountain,' afraid of the 'inward singing,' that is my best singing: and if it please me, let the world listen to the other singers who need ears; if it please the angels, what if men do not hear it? There is always strength in Silence.

You will be glad to know that I am yet very much occupied with H. W. Beecher's Sermon. I do not desire to hear much preaching; I confuse the topics and lose them. I was just in a state to profit by his strong and earnest appeal. I do not think I am, or ever have been a backslider, for I have never attained sufficient progress in the Christian way to lose much ground, and I have always cherished with great care the gleanings of light which I have found. To me the sermon was more a warning than a reproach, a series of landmarks, to point out my Future, rather than a denuncia-

tion of my Past. I felt as Magda expressed herself, after hearing a fervent exhortation from Hieronymus, 'Now thou hast given me a right good shaking.' I need something strong and urgent; I cannot be bettered by merely elegant diction and faultless commentary; there must be something akin to innate enthusiasm, — that you know.

LETTER XIV.

My dear A., —

Annie has doubtless told you that I wrote her of much sickness in our family. Since then R—— has quite recovered, after two months' confinement. Little Eddy is just beginning to leave his room, after three weeks' illness with a slow fever. C —— came home from Albany ill with an eruptive fever. Last of all a young man, who keeps a neighboring district school this winter, came to us nearly three weeks ago, sick with a pleurisy. His friends are all in Greene county, we are his only acquaintances here, what could we do? Father had him laid on his own bed, where he has been ever since. He is very ill. Inflammation of the lungs has set in, and I see no prospect of his recovery very soon. But with all these doleful scenes we have some rather amusing ones; I could not but laugh when the poor fellow came home. The doctor happened in at the same instant, and seeing his state, bled him at once. No

one was by but myself. I held a dish, like the fish in Cock Robin, to catch his blood. Father came in and spoke to the doctor, and while I was watching the crimson stream, the sick man fainted. I called out to the doctor, who seized and stretched him on the floor — over went the chair, out flew the cushion. I ran away with the bowl, and Willy Clark coming in with some water at this juncture, calmly threw it into Ingraham's face. Then the doctor shouted for bandage. Father cried out 'camphor,' and you would have thought the French and Indians had come. At last he revived, and they carried him to bed. I hope you will excuse my dwelling so long on these matters, as they are all we have to engross our attention at present. We have nothing but our infirmities to boast of. To complete the catalogue, — our family numbers thirty, — we have been forced to send away two servants for theft, — and the third is laid up with a felon. I thought of you the other day, when I held four little boys to have six teeth extracted from them. I fancied your horrified look could you have walked in at the time. I think you will put this part of my letter on a par with the story of the Caliph Vathek for accumulation of horrors. You don't know how nicely we manage, though, to keep our domestic machinery all straight amid these counter influences, lay out work for a plain sewer and tailoress, and attend to the sick night and day, besides having a little chance to go to meeting now and then. No one has thought of complaining, for we have so

much to be thankful for. All pretty well ourselves, and kind friends coming to see us, and the school so happy and healthy and improving. Oh, dear friend! I thank God truly for having given us such large hearts that these things seem no burden, the performance of these offices, no merit.

LETTER XV.

Dear A., —

Laying reverent hands on one of your precious volumes of Longfellow, I just now took a peep within its leaves. What was my delight to find there the beautiful hymn sung at the consecration of Pulaski's Banner, which was published anonymously many years ago. It is one of my heart favorites, and never until now did I know who wrote it. Such a picture as that hymn always calls up in my mind! The dim church, the tapers, the white-robed sisterhood, the gorgeous fold of the 'blood-red banner,' the holy music thrilling all, and the brave young soldier, 'a chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche.*' I cannot believe but that these were the very words there uttered; that the stern heart of battle melted within *him* as he listened to those *Christian* strains; that the glory of 'the rush of steeds and men' paled in his soul; that he longed to fling aside his sword, and kneel with those pure and blessed spirits.

And then, when the last plaintive lines of that hymn

rose on the air, were they not unto him as a prophecy and a vision? Came not before him in sad light 'the soldier's bier?' He knew that his lot was drawn. He had no word of reply — no promise of faithful battle aneath the folds of that banner — pressed upon his heart the awe of death — came to his eye a dimness, —

> 'And the warrior took that banner proud,
> It was his martial cloak and shroud!'

LETTER XVI.

My dear A., — . . . . . .

I was never so fleshy or so ruddy before. But they do starve me, nevertheless. Amid all the festivities of the season, I emulate the unfortunate apprentice who had dumplings and potatoes for breakfast, dinner, and supper. Brown, or rather black bread, and milk, (for I have got as far as the last luxury,) is my sole food. Only think of that, ye revellers, 'who dwell at home in ease.' Through all the dinners of home-fattened turkeys, chanticleers, and 'ancient dame mince pie,' I sit like an unbidden guest for whom no plate is prepared. Even when New Year's Night was celebrated by an oyster supper, an unusual thing in this distant region, I sat with my slice of coarse bread, and my cup of milk, looking as placid as a June morning. Do

not you believe, if I were cast like Robinson Crusoe on a desert island, that I should content myself like Goldsmith's hermit?

'No flocks that range the valley free
To slaughter I condemn;
Taught by that Power that pities me,
I learn to pity them.
But from the mountain's grassy side
A guiltless feast I bring,
A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,
And water from the spring.'

In spite of philosophy, it is rather trying to the invalid, thrown out of all companionship and society, to feel that she is no longer needed in the great world that rolls on, ever on, with so giddy a motion, that the flash has died out from her eye, and the quick repartee from her lip, that the gift of song that flung a purple robe about her has departed, it may be, forever. Gone, too, is the smile and caress, and the loving word, and the gathering of welcoming faces that were wont to greet her coming footstep. And yet I thank the Father who hath not forgotten me, that it hath been so; for oh! how many a lesson of resignation and humility have been tendered to my unwilling heart, and hardly have they been learned; but the hope and the wish of all this that I used to love so well are gone now, and I think will never return. I have no desire ever to leave the retirement of these hills again. It has often been amiss with me elsewhere, and now let me live here, and here die.

I can hardly hope to be remembered by my friends in Brooklyn much longer. I am sure the Academy is now, indeed, rich in teachers. It is well that I had no mantle to bequeath to my successor, for Miss Lynch needed none; but if in the sudden wrenching asunder of the ties that bound me to my girls, any of those silver threads which I so prized were left, I pray that for the pity of her who from all the world's pleasures is dead and gone, that Miss Lynch will take them tenderly and broider them into the innermost fold of *her* mantle, and wrap them lovingly around her heart. Oh! my girls, my jewels, my precious flowers! So long had I toiled with a willing heart to lead them to the light; and then just as the dawn fell upon them, just as the darkness grew broken and striated with the golden red, and I knew by the fresh young flowers that sprang up and shook their leaves, glancing, fluttering in the early light, by the dim spangles that began to show, by the unbidden carollings and song-echoes, and such trembling vibrations of melody burst on my ear from many a silent, shady nook, — knew by all these, and by the softer voice and brighter eye and the tenderer speech, that the morning had come, — I was stricken down — down — and at last went feebly away forever, without even a parting kiss. But I rarely think of this now, and it is all a dimly remembered dream.

I sometimes sound names over to myself that I cannot get familiar, that were once well known to me.

I frequently think of Helen and Mary and Elizabeth and Caroline, and cannot tell till I get a list what their other names are; it is only by the soul and its emanations that I remember them. I know that it was one with a red lip and a soft shower of curls, that a certain tale was composed by a fair girl that had blue eyes and a gentle voice, and so on. Do I weary you, my beloved friend? Think then how long it is since I laid my head on your hands and spoke to you, and you will forgive.

And now I do not know what to say in apology for this homely country package I send you. I could have sent to the city for some kind of superfinery, but wished you should have something from home that would make you think of an old-fashioned country family.

That you may be very happy is the wish of

MARY.

LETTER XVII.

Albany.

Come, come away,
  And I will show thee treasures rare,
Mossy nooks where the sunbeams lay,
Shady dells where the breezes play,
Bursting buds on each tiny spray,
  Beauty everywhere.

Come, come with me ;
The hills in light are lying ;
Away in the woods is the roving bee ;
The laughing brooks are dancing free ;
The robin sings on ' the old oak tree,'
And the echoes all replying.

Come, sister, come ;
We will sit on the green hill-side,
Or through the meadows and pastures roam,
Or watch in the streamlet the eddying foam,
Or gather bright pebbles to bear them home,
With many a flower beside.

Come, dearest, tell me not
Such dreams as these are vain;
In life there is many a sunny spot,
And though we are bound to a changeful lot,
We 'll drop no tear its page to blot,
Or wither its rose-leaf chain.

Come, and when day is o'er,
Thou 'lt sing sweet songs for me ;
And my mother will smile as in days of yore,
And my sire forget that his locks are hoar ;
Each day shall be blest as the one before,
And more abundantly.

Dear Emma, —

I have been dreaming. The vision was so sweet to me, that I would I had not wakened. You may not be here when my vacation comes. Or if you go away from us not before then, you may be so engaged with your necessary preparations as to be unable to leave.

I will not think of your going. And if you did, you might be disappointed in the pleasure you anticipated. You would find a farmer's home, no luxuries, no embellishments, save those of Nature. A large rambling house, a great part of which is used for 'nothing at all in particular,' having been built and occupied for a school. Little does it seem, as I walk across those deserted rooms, (some of which I have not entered for years) and hear naught but the sound of my own footsteps, that they have once contained so many restless spirits. We never could make up our minds to leave the place for any other, though we sometimes talk of it. You would stand upon the old 'stoop,' and look out upon one of the most magnificent scenes that ever you beheld, — hills, woods, valleys, villages, the river, the mountains, with their grand outlines. I suppose the spots that are classic grounds to me would be but common earth to you. The 'brook,' a common stream, smaller perhaps than most; the 'hills,' barren ridges; 'the Dug-Way,' a huge basin crowned by woods holding a few hills and hollows; the 'forest paths,' mere cattle paths, &c. I have not the slightest doubt that you would wonder in the corner of your heart, how I could love them so. Our hill-streams are too narrow and swift to allow us 'to play the parts of Indian maidens.' We have no lakes, etc. to lionize. But, dear Emma, the grass is as green, the violets as sweet, the air as clear, and hearts as warm as in more favored lands. I have been dreaming that you should

accompany me on my visit to the dear old people, the most familiar acquaintances I have in the hills; that we would fill my accustomed basket, and enter one little dwelling after another, with kind words and a little gift for each. I want to show you my friends — seven dear old people, every one over seventy, who look upon me as a daughter. And then you should have a 'cart ride' to Uncle Nathaniel's, uncle to all Chatham, and see their charming residence. And you should go to some of those villages whose white walls we see glistening.

Do not laugh at me, dear Emma; I have always been so happy there, I fancy every one else must be so. Will you write me a line now and then, and tell me of yourself, your home, and your friends?

LETTER XVIII.

Dear Emma, —

Tell me how is it that we have learned to love one another? Till I lost you I knew not what you were. To know that you and Mary love the uncultured daughter of the hills; and speak kindly to her inner heart, and cheer her fitful spirit, changeful as the night-wind in the locusts; and tell such sweet stories of fairy life to be tasted among your pleasant homes; and hold

your hands forward to help her on her way, beckoning her to the bright future, the far future, — this is what I never dreamed of. I have some peculiar trials and griefs, and when these press upon me, then your blessed looks come up to me, and I rest on your love as something the world will not take away. Your little notes to me in Albany are doubly precious now. Dear Emma, your touching mention of those old saintly people is very gratifying to me. I have seen them many times since my return, and on each furrowed face and each hoary head were time-marks made since I last saw them.

Shall I tell you of the white cottages, uncle Daniel, and aunt Ellen? My parents and brother B. and wife visited them a short time since, and took me as waiting maid. You should have been with me in that low-roofed dwelling, in the cool porch whereat I kneaded the luscious cream-biscuit, and cooked the savory plums, and boiled the motherly old tea-kettle. You should have helped me out with the massive oaken table, and spread with me the snowy cloth, woven, washed, and ironed by the hands of that ancient dame. You should have accompanied me to the well-known pantry, where long rows of choice cheeses and cool butter-pots were ranged, the product of the same good soul's industry, all unaided, for though so very aged, they live alone. I am going over in a few days to clear-starch her caps, — will you go too?

The time-worn inmates of the Pine Cottage! Yes-

terday morn, while the grass was clinging to the earth with dew, I sought the hill and wood for the Aster and Golden Rod. I had achieved a mighty bouquet, and was preparing to ascend the steep, when Rover put himself on the defensive and uttered a loud bark. I looked on to the green meadow-side, and there was Aunt Isabel toiling along through the field with a weight of dried herbs on her shoulder, going to the village store for some little comfort for the good old husband, who is very feeble. There was an honest independence in the old lady's manner, and she stepped away slowly with her burden evidently contented. I think another sere leaf will scarcely find the husband with her. Eliza visited Aunt Martha yesterday. She is cheerful and clear-eyed as of aforetime; age seems to have left no more marks upon her than I remember of twenty years since. Aunt Molly's peach tree is 'falling into the sere and yellow leaf,' while the good woman is forgetting her golden fruit in visiting her friends in Otsego. She smiles pleasantly and speaks graciously yet. Uncle Philip and Aunt Lydia! The sand in their glass is nearly spent. Yet *he* came here two days since on foot, leaning on his tall staff, with a bright, sweet smile on his withered face, that made him wear almost a holy look, so old, so good. What a harvest waits Death!

LETTER XIX.

Sabbath Morn.

My Emma, —

If all other days in the week be stormy, let the Sabbath be sunny and still — it is so now. Most of our family have gone to meeting, but I am in mother's room while she sleeps, conscious only of the glorious day without, because of the light glow upon the closed curtains. I am rejoiced to hear by your letters that Edward's labors have been so blessed; it must be a great joy to you, this fulfilment of the words, 'The prayer of the righteous availeth much.' I think it is just a fortnight since that one of my aged friends, whom you visited with me in the little brown cottage, died. I remember when he was one of the stoutest men in the country round; now he was so bowed, and pale, and trembling, it would seem that nothing but the shadow remained.

Do not you remember Uncle Philip, another aged man? He is very ill, perhaps not to recover. Oh, Emma! there never was a time when so many of our little community were taken away. My heart echoes your words, 'Nothing enduring, nothing permanent!'

You ask where I am going this spring? I answer, nowhere while my mother is so ill. . . . . Have the birds come? Do other 'woods, the birds' warble know?' One or two glancing singers have flown around our

trees and home, and poured out rich gushes of music. There was a robin, too, in the quince trees, and a Phebe bird in the locust. 'Spring, the Awakener' is more welcome than ever, for she brings so early her music and her flower-buds. It does not seem possible that snows and tempests so lately desolated the land and sea! Dear E——, has not your heart ached for the poor shipwrecked sufferers along our coast? I scarcely know for whom to feel the most, those who went down in sight of human aid, or those who saw their fellows perish and expected to share their fate, and were saved to live in mourning for lost friends. I often think of sailors' hardships; my mother's people, many of them, snatch a precarious subsistence from the briny deep. It seems strange to me, that while our rich country has so much room to spare, any should choose the hard life of a sailor. Pray, pardon the incongruities of my sheet; it is full of them, I doubt not, for I have written at little intervals, and in haste.

LETTER XX.

Chatham, 1844.

Dear Emma, —

Hark! 't was the night-wind; all around is still,
Comes up no murmur from the shrunken rill;
Hark! 't was the shiver of the poplar bough,
There is no pattering of the rain-drops now.

Sealed are the fountains of the heaven's deep,
And the storm-angels all are hushed in sleep.
Oh ! for a shower ! one sweet, refreshing shower !
Such as were sent in April's joyous hour.

The spirit of the drought is a beautiful, but a fearful spirit. He walketh abroad at the noonday and at the midnight; he goeth up with the sun in the morning, and the clouds flee away; at noon he withdraweth the veil from the sun's face, and the grass withers; the cattle look wistfully at the dry water-courses, and the drooping leaves lie upon each other. At eventide he sitteth on the mountain-top, and a pillar of red mist riseth up, through which the evening star faintly twinkles; at night he folds his wing that the dew may come down to nestle in the flower nooks, but no clouds. For one month has the drought-spirit reigned; not a drop of rain; but the brazen sky above, and the scorching ground below. The streams have persisted in their goings in, and the moist rain with the parched earth holds no companionship. We may say, in the simple words of the Scottish shepherd, 'It is but a small thing to Thee, oh ! Lord, but to us a life's worth !' The wind freshens, would it might bring us rain ! How do these seasons bring closer to our minds our dependence upon Him who dispenses all our bounties ! Blessings on the little brook in our field, where the neighbors resort for water ! It seems exhaustless, yet there is usually but very little there.

LETTER XXI.

Lovely Emma,— . . . . . .

I have not visited Albany since I left school, but have long intended it. How shall I bear to walk through the halls where I once was so at home — a stranger? There is no spot there so hallowed to me as that little desk in the drawing-room. I see the old bridge now, the rushing water, the dark rocks, and your permitted spaniel! Do you believe, Emma, that the others remember us as we do them? If so, I must be hallowed in the hearts of a multitude, for a multitude are hallowed in my heart.

They are gathered again! They are gathered again!
Our places are filled with a shining train.
They are gathered again! but oh! not all
Who trod with us the echoing hall.
They speak, but the voices we loved to hear
Fall not to-day on the listener's ear;
They sing the old hymn we used to raise
When our words were blended in other days;
But a stranger echo that we ne'er knew
Seems breaking the ancient chorus through.
'T were sorrow to stand on that oft-trod floor
And mark no face that we loved of yore;
And meet the watching of stranger eyes
As they gazed on us in half surprise;
'T would bring up the hoarded thoughts of years,
'T would swell the founts of our childhood's tears,

To stand thus, remembering where are flown
Those who blessed us in hours bygone.
I should hear *the song that the violets sing*
In the balmy days of the early spring,
And the deathlike woe of our parting day
Would once more cross my shadowed way.
Never again must I press the hand
Of each gentle one of our sister band,
And hear their murmured words of love
Steal o'er my spirit like wing of dove;
For some are afar in their own loved home,
And some away on the ocean-foam —
They are parted by mount, they are parted by stream,
Broken for aye is their honey-dream.
No more do we bow at that shrine of prayer,
The Bible lies open, but we are not there.
Think you they miss us? Alas! 't were strange,
In this mournful world of ceaseless change,
Were we remembered, — the hours dance on,
And they give no thought to the sisters gone.

And now my mingled story is written, will Emma have patience to read it? Will she remember that it was written in a loving spirit, and not mind the thousand and two imperfections, which lie not only upon its head but upon its whole extent? I fancy you are asleep all this long while, that I have been so happy writing to you, and so sleep on, and Heaven's benison be upon you. Please write me very soon, if it be but little. Will you not?

LETTER XXII.

Chatham.

Dear Emma, —

I snatch a few moments late in the evening to say to you much, — much that I can tell you only brokenly. And first let me thank you for your letter, which came to me as comes the south wind to the dreariness of winter. Do you remember that I received a long letter from you when my dear mother was so very ill last fall, and that sheet was my companion for days and nights? So was it now, as I awoke from a heavy morning sleep, after having been up all night with my mother, and was greeted with the sight of your loved hand. I could scarcely read it for the tears. I have once more gone down into the valley of the shadow of death for that dear parent's sake. Once more has disease stricken her with a strong hand, and laid a weight upon our hearts. We dared not for days turn our eyes from her meek face, lest it should be the last look; but she is now better, much better, and though we cannot hope for length of days for her, we are like a cluster of flowers from which a great stone has been raised, lifting up our eyes to the sky, and though still bent, praising God. I have found out the old oak already, Emma. I have found many treasures near it, — long, feathery sweet Cicely leaves fresh as autumn, arbutus fully budded, cinque-foil and strawberry leaves, no flowers. Yet I have more pleasure in these first olive-branches of spring, than in all the fulfillments of summer. . . . . .

LETTER XXIII.

Whatever my dear Mary Allston may think of my writing her again without a reply to my former letter, I cannot resist a desire to address her once more by that familiar name. Do you not see that my prophecy in regard to your future oblivion of me was quite true? It is all right — your present pre-occupation of mind will have it so. But 'the whirligig of time brings on his revenges.' Let me illustrate. One of my most punctual and delightful correspondents is a wife, the mother of three girls. She says she loves to steal away from her romping little ones, and be a girl with me, to forget the cares of a housewife in the utterance of tender and pleasant thoughts, to me, her loving friend, and have a little 'learned talk' about art and literature, a little interchange of hopes and feelings, unalloyed by prosaic interludes of pudding and pie associations. She tells charming anecdotes sometimes of her darlings, and speaks beautifully of her husband, who frequently dictates a few lines.

You see my drift; one of these years I shall have my Mary Allston again, just as affectionate a friend as she used to be before these times. I have resumed my sunrise rambles, performing what some one irrevocably calls the 'gown-draggling exploit of brushing the morning dews,' to the no small detriment of my

personal attractions. Sometimes I make atrocious caricatures of the glorious scenery — houses with hills on their tops, cattle suspended among the branches of the trees, fences inclosing nothing, brooks running up hill, and horses larger than the stables. When I bring home a rude sketch of a tree, or rock, or farm, that can be recognised, I feel like a new Raphael.

I do not know as I shall go to Brooklyn. I feel a great sense of insufficiency when I think of it; I scarce dare undertake it. Could I go on the dull track of composition, as heretofore practised, it would be easy enough. But I *do* think such a teacher does comparatively little. And if I teach it, my whole soul shall be given to it, and all that I know, or feel, or experience, shall be poured forth for my pupils. I will write for them, read for them, study for them; I will have an entire new sytem in place of this unwearied round of composition; for I k*now* that more *can* be done than is done by teachers of this branch. Art weary, my sister? Good night. MARY.

. . . . . .

Here I am scribbling away in the coolest manner, unmindful whether or no I am preparing a weary five minutes' work for you. Besides, I have read in Goethe 'It is impertinence to write what none will read.' Pardon! for Auld Lang Syne. I know you will be glad to hear that, in spite of the ill health of the family, I am blessed with great content of mind, and a quiet happiness. My last year's mental sufferings

seem forever banished. The dear Father be praised! My heart sings daily with its inward joy and peace. Though I have writen daily to you, my soul has been full of sweet, solemn thoughts of you, my dearly loved friend. May you be a happy wife as you deserve. May you live to see shining heads cluster around your knee, and young voices calling you by the holiest name of earth. To the care of Him who will not forget, I commit you fervently, trusting you will ever bear in remembrance your loving friend,

MARY C.

LETTER XXIV.

Albany.

TO THE SAME.

How you hold up your hands and say, 'Misfortunes never come singly.' Mine, in the shape of letters from you, never come at all. I have a little wee fire in my room, in a social humor, though all alone. And though in reality you are so distant, you seem nearer to me than any other, and therefore my sociability, like a brimming cup, flows over to you first. I have been down stairs to get rid of my restlessness, and 'elevated the first murderer' for half an hour, with Kate and Fan, but all in vain. I am no whit more inclined to sit stupidly down and read than before. I have not any

thing in life to tell you, — not a word. I went to the Catholic Fair the other night, and such a scene — such a gay evening! I think I saw originals enough for ten of James's novels at least. I stood at a table with ——, and as there was no one there I knew, I laughed and enjoyed myself without restraint. I saw there the first gentleman I ever thought beautiful. They look well enough in general, but as for beauty! — I have been rhapsodizing about him and about his radiant 'eyes' ever since, to the great amusement of the good folks. But such weather as we have! Oh, that it was blotted out of the almanac! First snow, then hail, then rain, then 'splosh,' — keeping poor me in the house all the time. The cold has for the last three days been terrible. There is said to be great suffering among the poor, especially the foreigners. E—— C—— visited a poor widow the other day, a stranger here, with two children, who had neither bed, fire, furniture, food, or anything but a few clothes. She said her children cried all night with cold. Is not this dreadful? Oh! how I dread the winter and the snow. I do not love the snow. I never loved it. It is so cold, so glittering, so shroud-like. I think of the earth as one great charnel-house, wherein decay jostles the dead with rudeness. I feel the slow procession of the hours, as separately they pass along in one vast funeral train. I fear the snow, for it turns to a blank all the beautiful book that the south wind and the west wind and the warm rain

opens for us to read. It frightens away all my little lovers, the ground-sparrow and the tree-sparrow, and the katy-did and the bee, and it hides all the summer-brooks so deftly that none can find them, save sweet Spring, and she sleeps. Why should I love the snow? I am faint and shivering when it falls upon me, and loathe the heavy garments I must don. When I fold away the pretty adornings that are fitted to the season of the morning-glory and sweet-pea, when I consign to the dark wardrobe the transparent scarf and the pearl-white dress, I lap up in their plaits many a tear that *will* fall despite my womanly courage. May it please God, I die not in the days of the hoar-frost and the black-frost, of sleet and white driving misery. I should leave the world gladly, forgetting to thank Heaven for its beauty and exceeding loveliness. I should stretch out my hands toward the bannered, golden city, builded of emerald, and amethyst, and sapphire, forgetting that even with such had my pathway here been paved. I should lie impatiently on my sick couch, 'biding my time.' I would listen for the melody of the rapt seraphs near the throne, not remembering that the Lord had prepared richest music for my ear many thousand times, when I had not even prayed for it. I should say, 'Thank God, I die!' rather than 'Bless God, that I have lived!'

A rhapsody, — but from the heart. L—— has just sent me up a plate of grapes. They look so tempting.

I wish I could send them to you. I shall save them, and put them in a little basket with some melting rich nut-cakes that I made yesterday, and send them to a friend.

LETTER XXV.

Chatham.

To the Same.

Dearest, best loved Sister mine,—

I sit down to write you with a heart full, and yet I have not one word to say. I have talked with you by night and by day for the last fortnight. I have sent express after express to you on fancy's wings, filled with the good things of the spirit, and now I have nothing left but that which is 'stale and unprofitable.' Yet I begin my letter after the old style, closely written, for you know I have a certain affection for old things. I received your blessed epistle with such joy! It is the first time I have seen my own name since I came home written by a loved hand. But it took me a good hour to get over the first page. I have been trying to inject myself with your cheerfulness, and have laughed and talked with my mother, who is an invalid to-day, in my desperation, and now 'in the coolness of the evening hour,' I have stolen away to write to you, where the laugh and song of the merry children come faintly up to mine ear, and I can commune with you and with mine own heart, and 'be still.' Still! how long ere it

will be for ever and ever! I am looking over your cup-of-cold-water letter, for such was it to my thirsty soul, and my eye falls upon 'presentiments.' And so you do not believe in them? And you ridicule them in others? Let me tell you, then, that when man walks abroad without his shadow, he will walk free from forebodings, *and not till then.* I seldom mention my belief or disbelief in them, 'for a haunted heart is a weight to bear.' But I would willingly forget that such things are. They go forth with me into the pleasant show-rooms of nature, they wrap me in their dim veils at noon-day, and curtain my couch in the quiet midnight. Sometimes they hide themselves, and a sweet happiness walks by my side. Mary, when we two parted in 'sadness and tears,' a shadow was by me. Think not I speak lightly when I tell you that hour was to me as a foretaste of death. You, the ever calm, the even-hearted, the hoping, trusting, never can feel such fitful gushes of feeling as she who has never known control of spirit, has been wasted as in the conflict of years in her short life. I hope you will forgive me. We shall never meet more. You say, 'this is fantasie.' If it be fantasie, yet forgive me. You would not wonder if you looked in upon me. I sit day after day in the rocking-chair, a martyr to neuralgia, which has not left me for two hours at a time since I saw you. My mother is almost always busy in arranging the affairs of our large household. My sister E—— is in Albany, M—— in school, and the men in the fields. So, you see,

'I am alone, alone, both night and day,' but striving 'to do what good I may.' I teach, when I can, four little tiny children, and when I cannot, I lie down and rest. Thus, like a weary dream, goeth away my time into the vast abyss of the past. 'The rain, it raineth every day,' and only once have I ridden out. I walked Sherry out a couple of miles, but I do not love to ride as I used to. Now I am not going to say another word of the dismals to you.

. . . . . .

Since you positively request me to write in that agreeably diversified way, which in geography is called 'picturesque,' in criticism 'graceful,' in the Pickwick Papers 'promiskus,' and in common parlance 'helter-skelter,' (knowing beforehand my utter inability to write in any other style than the 'antique,') you will see as you go on how perfectly I am fulfilling the request.

It is very quiet. The poplar leaves faintly shiver in the low night-wind, and when it freshens among the branches, the trembling dancers send forth a quick sound like the first fall of the diamond rain of sunny days. There is nothing else heard, for one by one the busy feet have ceased their tread, and they are sleepers who have toiled or studied during the hours of light.

I have traced your letter through to the consummation, — the life, sufferings, and untimely death of your beloved sparrows. You shall have the story as soon

as I have obtained the Countess of Blessington's opinion as to the style, whether it be blank verse or 'blanker prose.' And are you quite sure as to the catastrophe? I have had a revelation on the topic in hand. They wept their eyes out because you were not at home, and died, suffocated in their own tears. This is not in the slightest degree apochryphal, but quite the thing — very unromantic and extremely affecting.

Since my return I have been reading the 'Tower of London,' 'Rose D'Albert,' and the 'Spirit of the Age,' a strange medley, and most so for me; but anything on earth to drive away this terrible neuralgia, and sometimes I fancied I forgot it when reading. The first is, however, all fine dresses and dates, and long names. The second is what it purports to be, a tale of troublesome times, both in the story, the writing and reading, but especially in the last. Plenty of fine clothes in this too, and French names; but rejoicing in naughty people, who contrive mischief faster than my mother's youngest child could do it. Do not read it; it is trash. The last of the three is fine! Such pure and perfect language, evincing such thorough acquaintance with the subject; such a delightful candor in criticism, and such a happy choice of writers! Do get it, if but to read his criticism on Alfred Tennyson; and I must send you Harriet Martineau's Song for August. It is the only poem she ever wrote, yet doth it not prove that she is a true poet? You will, I know, read it with pleasure, wherefore I give it place rather than my own crude conceptions.

Will you not write me something good? Talk to me. Everything about yourself, your people, your house, your friends, your sparrows, will be welcome and interesting, and the next time I will try and do it as I should, as I assure you I really can. You must get that 'Spirit of the Age;' it is glorious. I have been reading it for the third time to-day. Next week I suppose Emma will be with you. I shall gather flowers and twine a garland for each of you. Good night! You are sleeping now, I know; but if you feel a kiss on your lips in your slumber, know it was your ever loving

MARY.

LETTER XXVI.

Monday noon.

TO THE SAME.

I have just completed a grand Auto-da-fe, or general desk delivery. Have burned at least a bushel of papers and letters, and finished by a furious sweeping and dusting. It always makes me melancholy to destroy papers. There were letters filled with sweet wishes, and joyous young hopes; letters from those whom I never think to see again. There were a hundred sheets written closely in my own cramped hand, page after page, over which I had poured my whole soul — unprofitable employment for a 'worky-day

world ; ' there were the fruits of long hours of application, a thousand trifles beside, and away I sent them all to the fire.

. . . . . .

How strange it seems that our triumvirate should be so soon dissolved, — you and Emma loved, won, and carried away to new homes. I, (I speak this with truth, for I know it is so,) admired for what they are pleased to call my ' gifts,' (' I had rather be a kitten and cry mew,') flattered in words that I do not care to hear, praised for my good nature, abused for my pride, slandered for my free speech, censured for my chilliness — and all these, more and more, but most flattery — I half envy you. And yet, every woman's, if not every man's, destiny is in her own hands, and we are what we choose to be ; so I do not grumble. I do not appreciate others, and do not ask them to know me.

Dear Mary, (I will say *dear*, though it is old-fashioned,) how good that little letter of yours is ! It confirmed my faith in you, that needs no confirmation, and I am less disappointed than I would have been, had I not already foreseen that you would not come down here. Oh ! how often I fancy you here. In the long, long nights, sleepless as of yore, I weave little romances, of which you are the heroine, and being fettered by dread of no one's criticism, I conduct them to an end just as suits me best. I never felt the necessity of self-control more forcibly than now, and never possessed

less. Forgive me for speaking so at length of my own feelings, but it is a sort of mental relief, as it is to the patient to expand his narrative of suffering to his physician, — not that you can heal me. I must be submissive, and for one who is in reality as well as I, I suffer a strange variety of pain.

I hope that you, darling, will forgive me all that I said about duty, &c. in my last letter. I write in haste to repent at leisure, but you did not quite understand me. I did not want you to think me too selfish, too grasping; I know you have so many drafts on your time, I want you to do that which gives you the most pleasure. When you write home, will my love be too burdensome to transmit? Is it not light? With a whole heart full of love, good night.

LETTER XXVII.

Albany.

How delightful has this winter been in its mildness! I hate snow so much that it has really been a season of gratulation for its absence. I walk out every day, and in the clear, sweet air and warm sunshine almost recognize beloved Spring. I have heard of violets on the banks of the Oswegatchie, but there are none here. However, I plucked a full-blown dandelion New Year's

week at home. There is a little snow this morning, but the sun will soon melt it. I find the world, which I left last March, very much the same sort of world now; still it is much easier for the many to forget the individual, than the individual the many. Sickness and health, poverty and riches, gladness and sorrow, have all gone on in their appointed missions among men, and however much I may have suffered, I know of none of my friends whose last twelve months of life I would have changed for mine. I am often reminded of Richter's words, 'By great sorrows the heart is protected against small ones — by the water-fall against the rain.' So with me; a thousand things have passed unheeded, that once would have grieved and excited me. Have you never found it so?

LETTER XXVIII.

Albany, Nov. 27, 1844.

To the Same.

The snow is falling, Mary, —
The silvery, dancing snow;
It husheth all the mirth
Of our fair and goodly earth,
As it cometh all so silently,
Swaying to and fro.

But 'the heart's fireside,' Mary, —
It burneth bright and clear ;
What though the snow-flake falleth,
What though the tempest calleth,
It dimmeth not the flame of Love —
Of Love the ever-dear.

But oft its flashing, Mary,
Shows little corners dim;
Where sitteth trembling Fear,
Where coucheth Sorrow drear,
And Faith in gloomy shadow
Sings but a mournful hymn.

I am going to write just as if we were sisters, — thou the good, hoping, forgiving one, — I, the erring, wandering, feeble girl, — feeble in heart and body. Those were merry days, were they not, Mary, when we chatted over thy drawings? I know every one of them this minute, made when we walked that one walk so often, and wrote little billets, scandalizing our good teachers! How I have wanted to sit by thee once more in my own room, and talk over my own affairs! My affairs! truly, be it known unto thee that I, even I, am grown to be a woman of business. I carried to the printer's this morning the last sheets of our magazine for January, 1845, 'The Monthly Rose.' Thou wilt patronize it, Mary, I am sure, and obtain, oh! how many subscribers! It is to be written by the girls of the Academy, past, present, and future. I took thy 'Crystal Spring' to slake our editorial thirst, and so sweet was the draught that I longed for more. It will

appear in the first number; and I never mean to take such a license again, albeit I know well thy goodness and long-suffering. But give me a *carte-blanche*, sister mine, please do, with some of thy essays that are lying in the cases here. Strike the ever yielding rock of thy inspiration, and bid many more such fountains gush forth. My faith in thee is strong.

LETTER XXIX.

To the Same.

You will think that I have forgotten my old punctuality, and are not even haunted by its ghost. When I received your letter, every moment I had was devoted to nursing a young man who was lying on the threshold of death. Our family received your messages of remembrance with pleasure, and all desire me to convey to you their love and wishes for your happiness.

As married ladies always show their letters, I would be glad to make this such a one as you would not be ashamed to tell your husband was the production of your best friend; but incapacity, like murder, 'will out.' Some say the defect is in my head. *I* think it is in my heel, where there is such a shocking chilblain. I think Thetis must have plunged me in the Styx, as she did Achilles, all but my 'heel' by which she held me,

(vide Homer,) and this spot was the only one vulnerable to Jack Frost.

I have had only one sleigh-ride this winter. Judge whether it was a joyful one, when it led me to a hovel where an insufficiency of lights, fire, food, and clothing made winter dreadful. You *know* I hate sleighing, and snow, and ice, and all other manifestations of cold weather. When I am queen, in my realm there shall be no winter, but one long, golden, glowing summer. There shall be a perpetual shower of rose leaves on *my* grass, and the poplar leaves shall be the only creatures to shiver all the year round. There shall be a violet-colored twilight to last all night, and sweet winds in the morning. I was a summer child, and am true to the season that gave me birth. How *can* you like snow? It is so unmeaning, dead, stifling. I would rather see the coarsest brown furrow in dear mother earth's wrinkled face, than all the snow that ever fell. I suppose you like Miss Bremer's 'Strife and Peace,' with its storms, and ice-fields, and rushing Aas-gaardreja; so do I, a little at a time, when my head is hot, for its coolness.

I have no news of the world at large that you do not know. The rill of my general information is quite dry.

I received the account of your being happy without a particle of emotion. It is nothing more than what I expected. People very often are so, when well-matched in marriage, though it is becoming rather rare at pres-

ent, and will probably go entirely out of fashion. (I would advise no one who thinks of marrying to read Jean Paul.) You present quite a pretty picture of yourself and 'gude mon' of an evening, reading and listening; that is very conjugal; but, Mary dear, you will be too good a wife to be a literary one. A new year has come again, and with it, new hopes and desires. I thank God fervently that it has brought me health and happiness, and thank Him, too, for the good gifts it has bestowed on my dear friends. May you not forget Him in your present happy situation. He will not forget you.

LETTER XXX.

Chatham.

'I AM sitting on the' *stairs*, Fannie, trying to write to you with an awful steel pen. Time was when I was glad to get a steel pen; but prosperity puffs us all up, and I am not exempt from the 'all.' I have been used to tracing characters so long with a golden stylus, that this plebeian affair seems altogether detestable. I cannot use the other, because I found on Friday that the points were like the bill of a cross-bill, clean snapped across each other, so I sent it off to Albany to be repaired. So much for the pen.

I suppose this will find you in the very thick of stitching and hemming, — how much cambric 'as fine

as a cobweb' it will take for a given purpose. Oh! these odious preparations! I hate the word! I fervently echo Christina's ejaculation — 'Let what shall happen, happen quickly,' — especially weddings. I can do almost anything off-hand, if I do not stop to consider, from swallowing a great allopathic dose of bitter medicine to saying very hateful things to my dear friends; but if I must pause and ponder, and weigh and measure, and span with my fingers and pace with my feet, I am apt to take a disgust for the coming event, whatever it may be, and give up the matter altogether. Dear me! how I pity the child! There she sits, worried and flurried, and fancying a thousand troubles, large and small, and repeating, 'I hope' and 'I wish,' a hundred times a day. I do not envy you, Fannie. I like to have hopes and wishes made void by instant fulfilment. What says Jean Paul the Only — '*Seeking* was invented by Luthanus, and *waiting* by his grandmother.' Oh, wearisome preparations! I should like to live in a magic world where everything should come and go at once and silently, unexpected and unthought of till then. I think I should marry some day, if I could meet for the first time, on a calm summer's morning, a cavalier of noble presence, whom I should like at once, and who should woo me and wed me before the birds had finished their matins, — not else. And I should like to have my wedding paraphernalia come to me, as did that of Aladdin's bride to her, wrapped in fine napkin on

golden trays, borne on the heads of fifty Nubians. I could not endure to tear off breadths, and count handkerchiefs, and quilt ruffles, and buy spoons, and ever so much china, not to speak of the kettles, pails, tin pans, scrubbing brushes, and soap and candles. Pah! Where is the romance of getting married? You know, dear, I do not object to doing all this *for my friends*, if I must; but to mingle up with 'a lyrical intoxication of love in which one forgets heaven and earth,' all those foreshadowings and hereafters is truly shocking. Horrible preparations! It is like sharpening the razor before one cuts one's throat, or feeling of the water to see if it is cold before you leap off.

Now I think you are getting indignant, are not you? And you hope I may have something dreadful happen to me some day, do you not? But there will not, for all that, let me tell you. *I* shall never be troubled when *I* have company, for fear the biscuit will be burned. I shall not say meekly to my lord, What will you have for dinner? and stand in mortal fear lest *ma chere mere* should not like her daughter-in-law, — not I, so you need not wish anything naughty about me; it will not come to pass.

I suppose you were not sorry that you went home when you did, as the roads grew so much worse. It was a fortnight after I returned before I could go out at all, for the bad weather. How long I shall keep the memory of my visit bright and green! I shall never forget our last visit at Emma's. It was very diffi-

cult for me to be cheerful when I remembered what changes had come upon us, and what sorrows and joys had been ours since we there met last, and then I looked out into the dark, lonesome Future, and wondered what lay there in our three pathways, whether beasts of prey or angels of mercy. It is evident we shall always live apart, even if we grow to be old; that we shall meet only once in many years, and so, gradually new interests will spring up with each of us, and new ties and affections, for women have when married so little individuality; and then we shall at last nearly forget each other, or wonder how we could ever have supposed we should always be fond of each other. Is it not strange how we do change? I shall not forget you quite so soon, because some day I may write a book of good examples, and then I shall put a couple of chapters in for you and Emma.

There is a fearful commotion about house to-day. It is the commencement of house-cleaning, (think of that as one of your probable futures!) and two African women in plaid kerchiefs, and an Irish girl, are making the house uninhabitable from parlor to kitchen. Every soul of them is wearing the very minimum of skirts and faded calico dresses, (did you never observe that this is the invariable costume of house-cleaners?) and they clatter about in old leaky shoes, not mated, that they pick up in closets and garrets, and carry pails of water much too full over the carpets that yet remain on the floors, and the blacks are splashed and smeared

with hideous droppings of whitewash, and the Irish girl is tattoed with smut. They drag out helpless coffee urns, and tattered prints, and mouse-eaten papers, and cobwebbed books, and then put them back again, and make a great deal of dust, and call loudly through the dismantled rooms, and find everything that is of no use, and clutter up all the passages, and do a vast number of other useless and uncomfortable things.

Two or three days after.

Just at this juncture I was called off to get tea, and have not been able to resume my pleasant task of writing to you since. I am housekeeper, cook, and maid-of-all-work this week. I rose at four this morning, went away up the hills towards the sun into the woods, and over mossy paths, listening to the early birds, and gathering winter-greens and other spicy leaves for some beer for father, hunting about for the first flowers, screaming to frighten a cloud of crows from the pine-tops, and gaining health and happiness from the sweet air and exercise. Then I came back and made coffee, set tables, baked hot cakes, &c., and ate my brown bread and milk. During the morning I made and baked biscuits, cakes, wafers, and meat-pies. And having frosted my cakes, I have nothing to do this afternoon but sew and write to you. Have I not a medley of employments? I love to do these things for those I love, though I seldom eat much of my own cookery. I love to make my dishes look nicely, like

Imogen, who 'cut our roots in characters, and sauced our broths, as Juno had been sick, and she her caterer.' I meant to take this letter to the office this afternoon, but the perverse clouds, — no, the beneficent clouds, — are gently raining on the short grass, and I cannot ride out.

I suppose you have so much else to think of, so many pretty dreams and speculations, that the Spring, for its own sweet sake, excites very little pleasure in your mind. As a general proposition, the coming of green leaves and disappearance of snow-banks, as well as the visitation of blue-birds and sparrows, is a very agreeable affair altogether; but I do not suppose you go wasting your few precious maiden hours along the full brooks, or pulling the withered leaves away from the liver-leaf roots to let in the warm sun upon them, or gathering winter-green berries and last year's acorns, to carry to unknown squirrel-haunts as a treat to the little harlequins. How my cheek burns! Is it you, Mary, that is saying something bad about me? Say on! it is not true.

I think I never wrote you so dull a letter. I begin to feel already as if my little share of your heart was 'clean gone forever,' and I could not interest you possibly. How naughtily we talked of ——. It is strange we ladies are so unmerciful to each other. I doubt not she said the same style of things of us. Did you ever see such a heap of affectation, such pretty airs, and pretended literary tastes and criticisms, such an

artillery of glances and drooping eyelids, and jewelled fingers? These are the silly girls that make foolish women, indiscreet wives, and careless mothers, and bring our sex into disgrace unmerited. It almost angers me to see girls of fine minds and persons, slowly murdering true goodness and simplicity thus, — bending every blessed gift of Heaven to obtain the unworthy aim, — admiration. Some poor fellow will be attracted by her pleasing manners one day and marry her, and then, — (oh! how uncharitable!)

Some time when you are not engaged, please say on paper, with a pencil, 'Mary, I think of you pleasantly, — I am well,' — and send it to me.

From your loving

MARY C.

LETTER XXXI.

Chatham, April 12, 1851.

MY VERY DEAR, —

The spirit of house-cleaning having moved me all day until I am incapable of further motion, has departed, and the far more agreeable spirit of friendship has taken possession of my heart, and prompts my tired hand to pen a few irregular lines to you. On my return from Albany this week, I found an affluent epistolary shower had descended upon my desk dur-

ing my absence. For some of the drops I felt quite obliged, others flattered me, some wearied, but yours made music in my heart, and I wished to be like those tiny creatures, that at this season spread gay wings, and fly where they will. I could nestle close to you; and if, in the transformation, a pleasant little voice was left me, I would tell you a short story with it, far more pertinent than the silly repetition of 'Katy-did' — it should be 'Mary loves thee, Mary loves thee.' Nothing gives my blood a happier flow than your letters. I am so glad that I know you, and can write just as I think. I dislike to pen a letter as I would an essay on constitutional law, or metaphysics.

I am sorry to hear Miss —— is so delicate. She is young, and youth is potent to resist disease. I hope she will recover. But so many young ladies of —— die early, I cannot but think there is a prestige of 'passing away' about her.

Of course you enjoy house-cleaning! We are in the midst of that process. What a revolution it makes in the whilom stable structure of household felicity! The whole fabric of domestic comfort seems suddenly to cave in. One's Lares and Penates frown grimly upon their owner from accustomed places, carpets slide from under the feet, chairs disappear from their usual corners, books flutter their leaves in discontented heaps, not a cat can purr in unconcern, not a dog catch a wink of sleep in his common nook. And then the men! What a plague of Egyptian darkness they

are at such periods, — never sympathizing a whit with the priestesses of these annual orgies, and eating their cold dinners without a word of thanks. Luckily we fear disturbing father's equanimity with our ceremonies, so the 'pomp and circumstance' of the occasion are studiously kept out of sight, and the sirloin is roasted, the pudding boiled as usual. M—— does not dare say 'white-wash' or 'sand' this side the hall.

M—— goes to Albany this week. I shall keep the house and Mary Story while she is gone. The flowers are suddenly come upon us, and my household cares will be mingled with forest rambles; shall fry omelets with scarlet Balm-of-Gilead tassels in my hair, and a cluster of liver-leaf stuck in the waist of my checked apron. Mary and I are making beautiful imitations of flowers for some moss baskets, — roses, gillias, violets, lilies, syringas, heath-bells, etc.: they are charming.

You would like to see how well I am, dear ——. I walk two or three miles and back, up and down these steep hills, without much fatigue, — ride a great deal, eat, sleep, and do all things that sensible people do. I look slight, but am elastic enough to make up for that. The sun shines so warm and soft, the wind blows so sweetly, there are such bursts of music, such clear white clouds in the west, one cannot but be happy and feel a continual thanksgiving to the Lord of Life and Beauty for all He has created. Oh! in these golden days, how can we doubt that our Father means we

shall be very joyous! Shall the small birds rejoice and the trees burst their buds in the sunshine, and the flowers and streams be glad together, and *we*, only we, be dull and thankless?

My love to Dr. ——, and may he ever breathe the exhilarating gas of health and happiness, and escape the nitrogen of misfortune, and the explosive fire-damp of accident.

Your loving MARY M. CHASE.

LETTER XXXII.

To MRS. ——

A SHORT AND CRUSTY ODE

FOR A BIRTH-DAY.

As this, my dear E., is thy birth-day,
I strove the whole morning to write
A few lines — an ode, or a sonnet,
But alas! not a word could indite.

For dactyls and spondees went dancing
With pepper and spice through my head;
And the figures of speech that I wanted,
Were figures of pastry instead.

The cream of my thoughts went to custard,
I flung feelings and peelings both by,
And my types, like the types of a printer,
Were suddenly turned into 'pi.'

I tried to compose thee a stanza,
But could only a pudding compose ;
And I found it was meet for the dinner,
That the meat should be roasted in prose.

Quite vainly my ideas were mustered,
For the mustard was all in my eye,
And instead of Castalian potations,
Behold the potatoes were dry !

The only measures I made
Were measures of sugar and meal,
And when I my thoughts would have whetted,
I whet the great knife on the steel.

Oh, me ! those wearisome air-tights !
For if they are heated, you know,
By the fire of imagination,
The cake will surely be dough.

I 'm afraid that mine may be reckoned
An uncommonly flowery muse,
But with flour I so long have been busy,
My flourishing style must excuse.

I haste, for my oven is heating,
And only linger to say,
May I cook thee many a dinner
On many a coming birth-day.

Mary M. Chase.

LETTER XXXIII.

Brooklyn, June 15th.

My Dear, —

Did I not know what a feverish, excited life you live in the summer, I would be vexed at the little note you sent me after an epistolary abstinence of more weeks than my arithmetic covers. Luckily, I am just as busy as you are, and had I temper, have no time to be more generous than you ; so I am going to send you this dot of a letter, hoping to raise at least a contemptuous 'pshaw' in your heart. I think of you and Stockbridge, and the laurels, often enough, I assure you, for one who is in duty bound to render up all thoughts, hopes, and wishes for the use and behoof of five hundred several souls. I am so slight in person that I have had serious fears lately that I should one day be nothing *but* soul, 'without local habitation or name,' before my time. But now a new fear has come upon me, viz., that I shall have no soul left soon, — I have to exhaust the intellectual resources of my nature so thoroughly every day.

I trust you are having as delightful weather as graces these two graceless cities. It seems a wasting of good providences to spread out so magnificent a sky above heads that rarely look up to it. Mrs. P—— drove me out yesterday and the previous day,

some miles on the island, and how delicious was the smell of the white clover! so of the sweet brier and the wild roses along the road. To-morrow I go to stay awhile with her: I cannot tell how long. It will be very pleasant there, but I am already attached to this household. . . . . .

LETTER XXXIV.

. . . . . Our domestic machine revolves about as usual, our family fluctuating more than any stocks that are sold in Wall Street. I suppose you saw the eclipse, which I did not. I have been busy to-day, washed two dresses for myself this morning to drive away a bad head-ache contracted by sewing, and then sat down two hours to entertain a gentleman from New York; kept a cheerful little flame on the hearth for Cousin Ed., who talked and read 'Yeast,' embroidered on a set of ruffles for my new dressing-gown, assisted in cooking dinner, sewed again, brushed my hair, and ran away to scribble a half dozen notes, because father is going to the post-office. This is not a fair sample of my days, as I ride out a good deal. Pardon the dullness of my note, as you see I am affected by the eclipse. . . . . .
I should like to tell you about the sea, but one or two persons have mentioned the subject before, and I can

say nothing new. At Lynn, when it was pleasant, I went in the morning on a great rock, around whose base the waves calmed into mere ripples, lisped and murmured some liquid syllables that I could not translate. There in a little hollow I coiled like a black snake in the sun, watching how the silver white flowers were born and vanished on the undulating swells of that faithless blue meadow, and wondering if the sea-serpent were pasturing there; and if he should chance to come along and snap me up like a dandelion top, what a paragraph it would make for the 'Lynn News.' At low tide the top of numberless rocks are visible, covered with thick palls of sea-weed, like half-drowned giants or submerged Medusas, black and shaky. Nobody ever goes to that cove, and there is no sign of life there, except the living, thrilling, unrest of the sea. The other day I went alone to Long Beach in the storm to see the breakers, and it 'paid' well. Though I was frozen with the cold, buffeted with the wind, and stunned with the roar, yet I could not resist following the retreating waves down the sands; but quick of foot was I when back came a mighty green billow crested with curling foam, and throwing the foam far beyond me. I did not try races with the breakers again; but when the under-tow sweeps so gracefully back, one feels an absolute desire to be borne along with it. I am not afraid of the sea; it never would be unkind to me, though it has swallowed up so many of my kindred. . . . . .

LETTER XXXV.

The last night of 1851.

My dear E, —

Though 'it rains and the wind is never weary,' and my thoughts to night are hardly cheery — though sleepily winking, I cannot help thinking that just at this hour you are probably drinking your souchong or pouchong or oolong, or whatever your taste in tea may be. For my part, I never dare get in the habit of sipping that beverage, for it makes ten old maids in a month, on an average. Indeed, I am sure as can be, that our poor, dear Mother Eve, when she could not endure to see ripe fruit untasted and like to be wasted, went out to the tree while she waited to see if Adam would finish his 'chores' before tea, picked up just as many as then she was able, and piled them all neatly upon the tea-table. So the greenings and pippins, without any doubt, were washed down with the rill from the tea-pot spout, and the sin of the fruit was imputed, you see, to its otherwise harmless coadjutor, tea.

But stop. I confess, though I meant to digress, 't was not for so long drawn a sentence I guess. There's nought in my room but silence and gloom; lonely I sit by shadows enshrouded, where lately tall people and short people crowded; and but as a dream the memories seem of the good folks that came and the

good folks that went, of the glances and words that were given and lent. I say, well-a-day! I cannot believe it that Christmas is gone. I scarce did perceive it. Bowing here, turning there, with distraction and care, I scarcely knew where, away flew the hours, and away you went too, and I wanted to weep when you sped from my view. Father, sisters and brothers are united in saying you did us a wrong by such very brief staying. Father declares that the doctor and he scarce bartered a word at breakfast or tea; he also avows with inflexible air, he is going to Stockbridge himself, to take care. I know he will do it whoever may rue it.

Pray tell me, my dear, if any one knows how hardly it froze amid Berkshire snows, the day you so cruelly 'up' and departed and left us alone — forlorn, broken-hearted — twelve degrees worse than nothing, the weather clerks say, the thermometer stood at in town on that day?

. . . . . And tell me, besides, if you possibly can, what woman or man could have left a white petticoat? Up stairs we found it, with a binding at top and three tucks all around it. A nice undersleeve, too, did somebody leave, who doubtless doth grieve, and a pair of elastics that nobody knows, along with a pair of black silk hose. A black crape shawl was found in the hall, and I rather think that this is all. Poor Annie Story's gloves were not there, and so Mr. Farwell just lent her a pair. I did get some breakfast that day at eleven —

and Cousin Ned declares 't was a plenty for seven. That day it was dinner from morning till night, and people were going as long as 't was light; and so 't was the next, till vexed and perplexed, I could have e'en cried, but occasion denied. Friday evening, a very gay circle and merry, closed in round the stove that was red as a cherry; while I in a corner played little Jack Horner, and stole now and then a small nap, homœopathic, which I wished in my heart could have been allopathic. Some jested, some punned, some squibbed and some fibbed, and then Mary Story's clear warble rang out, and pretty Grace Clark bore the melody out; I dozed in the corner (nay, it's too true,) and dreamed a sweet dream of Stockbridge and you. On Saturday, off we dispatched one more cargo, and on the remainder we laid an embargo. Sunday again, but tempest and rain declared 't was in vain to go out to the meeting, and so we kept Sabbath by talking and eating; and, as sure as I live, your servant, this sinner, did penance for sins by cooking the dinner. Roast beef, duck, and dressing demanded such pressing attention, I almost neglected to mention that some one must read in the Bible for me, while I mashed down the turnips and served up the tea.

That evening I doubt it was raining without, and the wind round about kept a wild savage rout; but within it was cheerful, contented and good, and I would not have changed it a whit if I could. Father sat on the lounge, and I could not but see how lonely

'twould be when my head on his knee no longer might drop down at even to rest, or his dear arm enfold me at morn on his breast.

It is late and the year has almost fled. Let's utter a prayer for the well-nigh dead. Oh, eve and dawn! oh, night and morn! three hundred times ye have come and gone, while round the fiery-featured sun one course our ancient earth has run. For each bright day now swept away, wherein we wrought not, thought not, prayed not, for the greater glory of thee, our God; oh, let its record swift be trod beneath thy foot, while we anew begin our lives with purpose true! We come to bury the old and worn, his brow is furrowed, his garments torn. We write on his headstone, — pause and see where thou a twelvemonth hence may be. Toll for the dead — toll for the dead; the frozen earth is over his head; Heaven pardon his sins, he meant so well, — toll, toll the bell!

Mary M. Chase.

LETTER XXXVI.

WITH THE GIFT OF A 'PRUDENCE.'

Take it not ill, I pray thee, that I herewith offer to thy use a little Prudence! It may seem at first sight to be a small thing and humble, and yet even the com-

fort of a sovereign might be increased by it. For what saith the seventh volume of the sage Zoroaster? 'Prudence becometh a woman, and let no man despise it. She who hath none is even as one who goeth thinly clad in the winter time, or as one devoid of knowledge. What availeth the fine plaitings of hair and jewels and waving plumes, if a little Prudence be wanting? It is nought, saith the idle, but when she goeth in the streets she repenteth. I beheld one clothed in costly garments; she was fair to look upon; but when the storm came, she walked as one in great suffering, for she had no Prudence.'

So spoke this remarkable sage, and therefore I trust thou wilt not esteem it too light a thing to be worn by thee daily, for truly it may be renewed at little cost. The widest mantle that Charity ever bestowed is not enough unless Prudence crown it. It hath been said in detraction of its merit, that this gift 'plays round the head, but comes not near the heart,' but there is a fitness in all things, and while the aforesaid mantle comforteth the one, the province of Prudence is properly to warm the head. Here it should abide like unto a cap, that finishes the whole costume.

Prithee, remember how thou didst complain of the *coldness* of this world, wherein I deeply sympathize with thee. Since thou hast felt its keen breath, especially in thy goings to and fro in the great city, thou wilt have occasion to fortify thyself with this my Prudence, I trust. When Winter bloweth a rude blast in

thine ear, it shall no more tingle; when the black frost smiteth the roses, *thine* shall be blooming as ever. And fear thou not to make me a loser by it. What saith the wise man? '*That which I gave I have.*'

While preparing a little Prudence for thee, a beautiful beam of Happiness came to my heart, which else might not have visited me. Therefore no thanks, for Happiness is better than Prudence.

MARY C——.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO THE SAME,—

WITH THE GIFT OF A PAIR OF WRISTLETS.

I have wrought thee wristlets, dearest,
All for those fair hands of thine;
Wrought of wool, the whitest, clearest,
And of silk, so soft and fine;
'Neath this pleasant morning's sun,
Dearest, wilt thou try them on?

Dost thou like my wristlets, dearest?
Wilt thou be content to wear
Their slight bands whene'er thou fearest
Chilly winds and frosty air?
And will they remind thee ever
That my love is wasted never?

The other day I had the presumption to offer you a little *prudence*, but now I exceed it in assuming to cuff you without the slightest provocation, even more, to hand-cuff you! But I pray you to look with leniency on my errors, (in the stitches,) and believe them bands of love! Yours, MARY C.

LETTER XXXVIII.

DEAR MR. ——

DID it not seem to you a remarkable thought in Mr. Thomas Traddles, Jr., of the Inner Temple, that when Mr. Dick was copying and could not keep King Charlie's head out of his mind, he furnished him with an extra sheet on which to record his flights of fancy, and so enabled him to get through his task with no small success?

My employment to-day being akin to Mr. Dick's, (and also my special abhorrence rarely practised,) I have conceived the idea of following that gentleman's example. As I write, I think of fifty things not apropos to my subject, and make such woful errors. I have decided to commit to this sheet a part of my aberrations, hoping my manuscripts will improve in consequence.

I have given up my pen in desperation, and am going to the woods.

Have come back; had a glorious time. The road

above us is drifted full, and the drifts are crusted. Followed a wood-path a long way through the silent pines and oaks. Flung snow-balls at my dogs, and Rover threw me down in revenge. Oh, what a merry frolic we had. Rover drove Tray away, and then Tray chased him home with a great stick in his teeth. Sunset upon the Caatskills! A flame-red ball slowly dropping behind their sharp blue outline, and streaming rose-colored light over the brown hills flecked with white.

I hope you will like this little poem. It is very simple, but is called one of my best, and so I send it to you. I would not copy it for any one that I did not feel sure would be interested in my sweet mother. I wrote these lines with a quick rain of tears. I cannot read them now with composure. Oh, my beautiful mother! I try to do right, that I may see her again.

On the morning of her death she said: 'Set aside my staff, and bring me flowers.' I went out for them and quickly returned with a handful. She pressed them to her lips, laid them in sight, spoke with us all, — who would not have shed a tear in her triumphant path-way to heaven, if it had cost us a life to restrain them, — drew the bed-clothes smoothly across her breast, laid her hands meekly upon each other, and with her brown eyes so soft, so touching, fixed on her husband, her lover even in old age, gently withdrew from the stately form she had so long dwelt in, and we saw her no more! Now do you not love my mother? the first, best,

MARY CHASE.

LETTER XXXIX.

Chatham.

My dear Friend, —

Estranged, I surely said to myself, but 'repellant,' no! I said, 'The well-founded hopes, the deserved enjoyments, the honest ambitions of my friend, have absorbed him quite, and it would be strange if time hung so heavy upon him that he should strive to kill it by a letter to me. I said, I have written too carelessly to him. I have with wilful abandonment left ajar the door of my soul's dwelling-place, and he has seen what an unthrifty housekeeper she is, and how the cobwebs grow there, and the dust lies thick, and the rich handsome raiment is tossed recklessly away, and he cares not for another such ill-repaying glance. I have not deserved remembrance, I said, so my friend's weariness of me shall prove a salutary, though unpalatable medicine, and if I cannot reform this unthrift I will hide it.

I wonder that you wrote to me. I suppose it was a duty, or a compassion, or a condescension mood that impelled you. I knew you were in C——; Mrs. A. told me so in Pittsfield; the 'Tribune' told me so in Lebanon; E—— told me so in Buffalo; your mother told my sister so in Albany; everybody said so, except — yourself. What are your plans? I am not sure but

the *laisser aller* is the true view of life. Action! why even inorganic matter can act; neither you nor I, nor all the men and women living, can any way equal the force of elementary matter. Action! why the elephant, or the dromedary, or the horse, or the ox, can overmatch us in deed. In *not* acting lies the merit of the soul. They knew it who decreed criminals to solitary confinement without employment. Not to stretch forth the hand, not to uplift the voice, not to lay hold of the pen, not to send forth the spirit of toil — this is true desert, this is worthy all praise; and must, oh, it will, according to the judgment of the angels, and in the sight of Heaven, be rewarded. Whoever in view of the loveliness and awfulness of life can refrain from becoming an actor in its scenes; whoever can quench the flame of ambition; whoever can come down from the mount of prophecy, and hide in the cave of Horeb, as Elijah did; he is a mighty conqueror; such work is a true achievement.

I hope this appears like a paradox; I hope you will not believe it, and pray you will never have to learn such a lesson. I hope you will never say with Milton, 'They also serve, who only stand and wait.' Oh, my soul, hold fast thy faith in God! I am so pleased that you are happy. What a pleasant word that is! And there are some things you would like to talk of with me? But I do not think we will ever meet. It is writ down either in the volume of Fate or the inventions of man, that we shall have a motion like that of

those binary stars which from age to age revolve about each other.

. . . . . I spent August in Western New York, and a whole life at Niagara, then home again in a week; and I was ready to go for a little while to Brooklyn, until Mr. C—— could get a teacher; but an utter weariness took possession of me. All the fatigue of all my journeying, my visiting, my sight-seeing, came upon me at once, and I could not go. I went to Lebanon. By the cold springs lingering, lying on the warm knolls of the mountain meadows, listening to the leaf sounds among the vast woods, never *thinking*, never reading, never working, but dreaming, twining delicate fancies and half-formed visions into one variable intangible braid, I found rest, and rest to me brings health. Perhaps you have read a late critique on Wordsworth in the 'Times.' It's a shame to pull down one's card-house when we are 'making believe' it is a castle. If we can be comforted by the sweet ministry of Heaven, do let us have that harmless consolation — never mind if it is of the catnip-tea order; like that inestimable beverage, if it does no good, it is powerless to hurt.

You wrote your letter on the principle of Sam Weller's Valentine, as I think, to make me wish there were more; you make it a sort of index, such as book-makers put before a volume, a bill of fare, but you ask me to a Tantalus feast. Some time I hope you will, as Mr. C—— used to say, 'Illustrate those topics.'

MARY M. CHASE.

LETTER XL.

Brooklyn.

You were never homesick, so I need not tell you that I am so to-day, for you would not comprehend me. Please understand that I went without my dinner, and this fine, sunny, breezy afternoon, am sitting in my room with the curtain half down, one slipper on, the other I do not know where, the pins pulled out of my hair, the purple tassels, that ought to make my wrapper so smart, in the corner on the floor, and you will have a faint idea of my home-sickness. I do not dare to write home in this humor, but am perfectly willing to bestow my 'tediousness' on you for being so bad as to run away just as I came here. I never felt so like Dogberry in my life. If I have 'two gowns and every thing handsome about me,' I have also 'had my losses.' They at home objected to my coming here. As I heard nothing from your 'most certainly' May visit, I did not feel that I was committing any breach of hospitality to come away; had I dreamed you were really coming to Chatham for a day, I would have resisted Mr. C.'s 'more particularly,' and been there to do the honors for the pines and newly tasseled hemlocks. I think I am by nature a little silly, but I know it was the climax of folly to come here; I hate to be inserted like a wedge

into the cleft of emergency.* Of course, one feels very useful and important, but, as the politicians say, 'It is a tight place.' I have literally succeeded to the labors of Miss Field, but the very slightness which makes me elastic at home is not so well adapted to my present state of compression. I only 'talk the character,' play I am teaching — as to work, Miss F.'s application is out of the question. Oh, — ——! this 'creating a soul under the ribs of death,' this giving to 'airy nothing a local habitation and a name,' is enough to depress even my mercurial spirits. I shall go home the last of this month for a few days at least. I have felt badly ever since Mr. C—— called me to look over a letter he had from father. It read, 'Nothing but the remembrance of past friendship would have induced me to part, for even this brief season, from her who is the light of my eyes, and in part the support of my life.' Had I not reason to sit down on the floor and cry? And then I cried again over your letter, because I was not at home to show you those scenes I have so praised. It is all your fault; I am glad of that. I feel like finding fault, a state of mind I have not been in since my elder sister made me pick out a whole hem in my sampler.

* This letter was written in the spring of 1851, at the time mentioned in the 'Life,' when Miss Chase responded to an unexpected request to take charge of the Composition Department in the Brooklyn Academy for the summer term. The time should not be confounded with previous teaching in the same institution, referred to elsewhere in a different tone.

I evinced it to-day to Miss B ——, my former pupil and present assistant, who said triflingly, ' Miss F —— did *so ;* ' I replied, ' *I* wrote reviews when you were in pantalets.' Think of that speech from my lips ! Faint, cross, weary, selfish ! And this in B——, where I have such dear friends, and in the house where I am treated as a welcome guest, petted like a flower, tenderly humored in my little fancies, meals provided such as I am accustomed to at home, a formal lunch sent for my sole comfort daily, with my dear hostess herself coming up to my pretty room, (where I have a bathing-closet and every hydropathic convenience,) how naughty I am growing ! Have you never seen a hardy, slender wild-flower droop and grow sickly when transplanted to the garden ? Even so with my mental arrangement. As the rudest blast of the hills better fits my *physique* than ' the sweet security of streets,' so the graces, the homely graces of mind that thrive there, seem to fly away from the smoke-laden atmosphere of town. I feel as thankless as if I had no new dresses and sleeves, and am so tired of good behavior and fresh ribands. I long for my straw flat, my plaid jacket, and the tough little stick that helps me climb the steep ; I will go back to them and stay there, — that I will. I am sorry to hear you are so worn by your recent exertions. The waters of Saratoga are mere rivers of Damascus compared to the narrow Jordan of my father's meadow. Were I delivered out of the hands of these accomplished Syrians,

I should prescribe them for you. There is just that dreamy stillness in our old parlor that would coax you to a nap on the lounge; that bird-music o' mornings to gladden your heart; that old-fashioned hospitality, that would make you feel at home. I would have read cheerful stories or poems softly for you, brought rain-washed flowers to your table, and made delicious puddings for your dinner. Does not the circle of hospitality run through those three points?

LETTER XLI.

Chatham, Feb. 1852.

Dear Mr. ——.

It is just a month since you wrote me. I know I am replying in rather indecorous haste. I should wait at least another month, according to the suggestion of your example, but my natural perversity of disposition induces me to be 'contrairy' as Mrs. Gummidge herself, though not exactly 'lone and lorn.' We are having such a long snow-storm! There seems to be no religion in a snow-storm, for it has been blowing and drifting nearly every Sabbath this winter. When I become 'the oldest inhabitant' of this region, I shall speak of this winter as the hardest I ever knew. It has rained but twice since last autumn, and but twice has our sleighing been interrupted. I might have en-

joyed the privilege of driving out nearly every day, if I did not hate winter so. As it is, I have almost worn out my mittens and gloves with 'the lines.'

The impression I received from your last letter, and yet retain, is, that in spite of what you say of your excellent health and happiness, —— is subject to malaria. I am confident that you have the fever-and-ague, and wrote me while the chill was on. You smile, but I am as much in earnest as ever you saw me. And worse than all, such affections are contagious; for I wrote to a friend, while under the influence of your letter, so frigidly, as to give mortal offence! Let me prescribe for your malady. A small dose of the ipecacuanha of immediate repentance, to throw off the burden of present occupations; to be followed by the quinine of the memory of old friends as a wholesome tonic, taken daily; one application of the stings of conscience, by way of stimulant, is good in extreme cases, but loses its force on too frequent repetition. If you could induce some friend occasionally to administer a lively effervescing draught of scolding, it would assist in the cure. I do not know but I would undertake it myself, if I were not pledged to cold water and moral suasion. But perhaps you have recovered from the chill by this time, so I will not incur the hazard of bringing it on again, by dwelling on the subject; a procedure, I am told, very injudicious with respect to convalescents. Could you have looked in upon us at Christmas, our happiness would have been

complete. The baker's dozen who emerged from B—— at that time, spite of snow and cold, brought you so vividly to my mind. If you care to know that you were missed and regretted, it was so. It seemed so strange not to see you when I saw ——. I felt as if something were lost, and how often I caught a tone in the gay tumult of voices that for an instant was like yours. I wish you had been here! At supper I passed by F——, (for you know we cannot improvise servants up here, and all became Martha's for the time being,) she caught my frock, and said, 'Look here, Mary.' I stooped, and she kissed me with her mouth full of grapes. How we all laughed! You see we proclaimed Chatham law — everybody do as they please, and etiquette was made nothing of, custom snubbed, and fashion set in the corner to learn manners. If you had only been here!

. . . . . I do not like to say anything about Kossuth, but I must be honest. I 'skip' all his speeches and shun all his letters. I admire the man, but I am tired of the 'doings.' You need not think my Boston cousins have chilled me about him. If I were rich I would give him all the 'material aid' I could spare, if he would not say anything more. I hope he will succeed. He certainly is bound to get us in the grand 'snatch' game preparing abroad. I think it would be rather refreshing to change the tone of our politics, and stump the Union for Mademoiselle Liberty in a red cap *contra* old Nick in his bearskin. The great ques-

tion, whether cotton gives value to spindles, or spindles to cotton, would be forgotten, and both spindles and cotton receive a new impetus. Carolina would cease to forbid Massachusetts from 'sliding on her cellar-door,' and Virginia would offer Vermont a fresh plug of tobacco in token of renewed fraternity. I think the centripetal force of the Union would be vastly increased by a little outside pressure, and if a few or many migratory politicians get caught in the crevices, so much the better. No cement equal to the blood of a sacrifice. There! if I am not quite a Miss Martineau or Madame De Stael, I do not remember ever uttering so long an harangue before.

LETTER XLII.

Chatham.

Draw your chair — no, I will, round here by cousin Nell; take some of these French lozenges; they taste well; do they not? Do not listen to the dripping of the wasting snow; the treble curtains shut out the south wind. Nell, so beautiful, so brilliant, with her radiant eyes, and quick, keen remarks and varying expression of face, and impatient, gesticulating hands, — you like her, I am sure; I thought you would; I have told her about you, she is such a pet and darling of ours. Do you feel a chill as large as a cam-

bric needle from the crack of that door? Here is this soft, light India shawl with peacocks and pagodas that I put over Nell when she lies on the lounge, and a cushion for your feet, and a little pillow for your head. Have I made you comfortable? Sister's knitting is growing fast, is it not? Does not father look like a grand old oak, a little dead-topped and hoary, but stout and storm-defying yet? What shall we do? There are the Tribune and the Albany Express and Journal; or shall we talk of Margaret Fuller, or of the Girlhood of Shakspeare's Heroines, and all sorts of commentaries on that worthy, — Courtenay's, Jameson's, Hazlitt's, etc., or of Aytoun's Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers? It is little use to talk of books, for we always ascend or descend from them to things, and then to people, and ourselves. We get lazily coiled into corners or dropped on the carpet, out of all character of ladyhood, and so we shall to-night. How do you like the old parlor? How do you like us? We are real good people, let me tell you, and we fling the ball of life gaily from hand to hand, and little do we care whether it rain or snow without. I wish you were here; Nell's little French soups and desserts would be just the thing for you. Julia would sing you both asleep, and sister talk you both awake.

I would not answer your letter now if you were not sick; but I think of your slippers and neuralgia, and I am made generous. What made you write me when you were ill? I hope you will soon transfer your

Parsee-like adoration to the great luminary himself, instead of bending before the domestic altar; I hope his beneficent light and heat will make you yourself again. Easter has passed, and the Liver-leaf flowers, the 'Paas-bloomies' of the Dutch have not made their appearance. It was never so before since I can remember. I have raked away the dead leaves over the violet-roots, but the buds are not yet formed; not a 'pussy-willow' has blown, not an 'alder-tag' started. There is snow everywhere, and mud under that.

I'm longing for the spring-time! I'm weary of the snow!
I wish the drifts had melted and perished long ago;
I wish the early blossoms were blowing in the wood,
And the blue-bird's warble ringing amid the solitude;
There should be a balsam odor up among the budding boughs,
There should be a flood of music all the lovely things to rouse,
There should be a rush of waters, rapid as the falcon's wing;
Oh! I'm weary of the winter, I'm dying for the Spring!

Where does the south wind linger? oh! how I did rejoice
When in my dream I listened and thought I heard his voice;
He is loit'ring in Bermuda, or on the Spanish Main, —
When will he spread his pinions and come to us again?
I tremble in my longing to hear his soft caress,
Like some dear friend returning to comfort and to bless;
He will kiss the tasseled maples and in the hemlocks sing;
Oh! I'm weeping o'er the winter, I'm sighing for the Spring!

Where is the idler sleeping? In vain I wait and call, —
There comes no answering token from beneath the snowy pall;
The forests creak and glitter, the fields are white as death,
The north wind blows forever a cold and biting breath;

The frost creeps up at evening across the window-pane,
And by the glowing fireside, my crouching dog has lain;
I cannot wait for summer, the sunny days to bring, —
I'm pining all the winter; oh, I'm longing for the Spring!

I know the time approaches, I saw the sunset glow,
Fall redly on the clock-face three pleasant days ago;
I know the sun is coming to the northern Tropic back,
Its glory always rests there upon its homeward track;
I see the willow branches have gained a golden hue,
The purple alder-tassels are almost breaking through;
Ere long the balsam-poplar its crimson drops will swing, —
I cannot bide the winter, I must behold the Spring!

I know 't is surely coming; I feel it in my heart,
Wild strains of joyous music seem ready thence to start;
Gay visions haunt my slumbers, sweet voices gently call,
I think of those I love best, — their forms are round me, all.
Life seems so rich a blessing; a glad, ecstatic thrill
Through every nerve is flashing; my soul will not be still;
The south wind soon will whisper, and soon the blue-bird sing;
Die! cold and cruel winter; live, only, blessed Spring!

But my cry for Spring sinks into the silence of despair. I have nearly lost all faith in the goodness of God, and the prognostications of the almanac. It seems as if the precession of the Equinoxes had gone backward, and we were in the sign Sagittarius. It will be a long time before 'from Aries rolls the bounteous sun.' 'Gentle Spring's ethereal mildness,' is a humbug, the 'mysterious round' of the seasons mere hocus pocus. March should be shut up in the

Penitentiary as a vagrant with no visible means of getting a livelihood. April deserves the State prison for obtaining goods under false pretences. Winter holds on like a Loco-Foco Judge, and pays no more regard to pledges past, than our Canal commissioners. I move that a writ of ejectment be served on him, and that an exploring expedition be sent to the Tropics for Spring. This late season is doubtless to be attributed to the machinations of the Southern States Rights party, who wish to prevent their products from going North. They shall not have ice enough next dog days for a 'sherry cobbler.'

You speak of Margaret Fuller. The book is a strange one. One quarter of it would be better than the whole. The same sentiments, praises, criticisms are constantly repeated. I always disliked her while living, but cried and took to my bed when she died. That last scene redeemed an unwomanly life.

> 'My love, so please you, shall requite
> No woman either dark or bright,
> Unwomaned if she be.'

I have been reading Ike Marvel's Reveries. Is it not a book for the Indian Summer? So still, wrapt in a dreamy, liquid, golden light, with sudden stirrings of passion, like the autumn wind whirling the dried leaves, and filled with shadowy, shifting, smoke-wreathed pictures, as that beautiful relapse of summer delights to show.

LETTER XLIII.

Chatham, 1851.

Dear Mr. ——

My pen has lain six months past in the top of its case, until I broke my new knife yesterday in inveigling it out, and it seems to have a chronic hair in the point, now it is out. I do not like to write to you today, not at all. I would rather lay my cheek on the paper, — so, than do anything, and shut my eyes in the still sunshine, and dream. A picture for you! A small dining-room, on whose walls a countryman leads two shaggy ponies to drink from a ruined fountain, year after year, and whose thirst seems like the laughter of Homer's gods 'unextinguished;' and where a few sheep and goats are forever nibbling slate-colored grass; windows looking towards the south, through which the white sunshine of winter pours a glittering flood — how warm it is on my hair, and what beautiful tints it gives this blue and purple sleeve; a little ivy twining up one window and a young calla in the other; three bird-cages on the floor, and Dolce, Mignon and Will Barnes tripping on the carpet, caressing each other, and telling sweet little stories; one, two, three baskets of moss, flowers and evergreen vines with fragrant berries, giving a balsamic breath just here at hand; pretty Flash, with his glittering un-

winking black eye fixed upon me as he lies basking in the sun, in his vase before me; Father and M., Rover and Tray gone out for the rest of the day; the pussies consigned to the pantry for the birds' sake; it is so still, so sunny, I would like to fall asleep with my head on the table, and the trimming for Fannie's curtains in my lap. Instead of writing, I would like to speak to you. It was a maxim of the (worldly) wise Cardinal Alberoni, 'when you cannot *act*, the next best thing is to *talk*, — something may come of it.' By analogy, when one cannot talk, the next best thing is to write.

Your letter has made me feel very thoughtful, I will not say badly, for that would be exaggerated. I see you are of Sir Tobey's opinion, 'Not to be a-bed after midnight is to be up betimes.' I am sorry you wrote me when you had so much to do. I cannot endure to have a friend write me from any feeling connected with either exponent of the potential mood, except 'would.'

I wish to speak of yourself, yet I do not know just what I would say, or how to express it. You have already commenced theological studies; the strangest thing that ever was! About that I *do* feel badly. To immerse your beautiful youth within the walls of a seminary, ruin your eyes, stoop your shoulders, for, how many golden months! And that over, the weariness, the stated task, the exhausting labor, the ill-requited toil, the ingratitude, the selfishness, the *un-*

appreciation, — it makes me shudder and cover my eyes! *Must* you, *will* you take up this wearing vocation? Oh, Mr. ——, it is too bad. I wish you were very rich, so that you would be tempted to live at ease. If you can face all the difficulties peculiar to this calling, if you enter upon it from a feeling of duty, believing yourself in the position required by Heaven from you, God speed you, and let none lay an obstacle in your path! Teachers of the Truth are needed everywhere, and genius will make its own light to shine in every pursuit. You will 'succeed' — people will admire you; your name will be spoken praisingly; some congregation will build a handsome church for you; more, much more than this, you will have great content and satisfaction in knowing that you are doing good, and rendering acceptable service to the great Father. But why must you study? You dare not enter upon the sacred office, unless you believe that God has called you to the work. Whom He has called, will not He prepare? In what respect will you be more fitted for His service when you have finished your course than now? Will you love Him more, fear Him more, have greater zeal for the extension of His glory, a more perfect sense of His mercy and loving-kindness towards us, His beloved children? Will your own life be more excellent, your lips more eloquent, your desire to benefit your brothers in His love, greater? I do not believe it! I do not ask you to believe me, for you are far wiser and better than I,

but believe your own Conscience, which will tell you that no man, nor set of men, nor all the pious writings of holy men, from the foundation of the world, can help you one step towards becoming the minister of God! Unless He teaches you, you are not taught. Unless the seals of His mysteries are opened by Himself, you will never read aright its contents. Depend upon it, the profound, wonderful treatises of the subtle logician and accomplished orator, Paul, never won more hearts to *love* God, than the simple, fervent, tender gospel of the beloved disciple, whose school of Divinity was on his Master's bosom.

But I am out of my province. I have written of what was no business of mine. I should not write thus, if I had a thistle-seed's weight of influence with you.

Your letter has made me very thoughtful. How far off and strange you seem to me! I read it just at night, and went about all the next day quite as if I had dropped my thimble, or could not find my scissors, or mislaid my Shakspeare, or lost some other necessity of life. I am growing afraid of you; you seem so far off — so far off — your face is so dim and still, as I see you in the doorway where the white sunshine is dying out! This letter needs an apology; but they never taught me how to make one properly. I have lived too long among fetterless streams and winds. I never learned the Talleyrandique use of words. Thanks for what you say of yourself. I shall toss up

a penny in the morning to see if I shall send this to you. Heads! so it goes. If you will but read it in the spirit in which I have written, you will not take my bold heresies unkindly, but commence your labors by setting me right. Your friend,

MARY M. CHASE.

LETTER XLIV.

TO A FORMER PUPIL.

MY DEAR ——,

On this quiet Sabbath afternoon, my thoughts revert to you with such interest, I cannot forbear expressing a few of them. I feel that I ought not to write you without abstracting my mind from other cares, for you ask me a grave question; and, it is too serious a one to answer without much reflection. Let me first thank you for the love and confidence of your letters. I wish I were more worthy of them; I wish I were more capable of repaying that confidence by sound advice and wholesome counsel. I am like you, my darling, an impulsive, high-tempered, imaginative person. I distrust many of my own conclusions. I rarely advise, but sometimes I have so clear an apprehension of duty, that though I cannot explain how it came, I never refuse to carry it out. I suppose this is commonly the

case when persons have an earnest desire to act in accordance with the will of God. I am not one of those mystics who look for miracles of prompting and *occasion*, but I cannot have so low an idea of the greatness and goodness of God, as to suppose that He has ceased to communicate directly with His children. Whatever the professed creeds of various sects may be, I could point to numberless examples of true Christians in each, who have left undoubted evidence of having received such teachings and instructions as did not come from man, were not eliminated by any process of reasoning in their own minds, and were often entirely contrary to what prudence, choice, and the counsel of friends, would have produced; but, having followed these teachings, they were proven by the result to be unerring in Truth and Right. These monitors are not to be confounded with the intensity of desire, which often produces a sort of belief that what we wish to take place will transpire, nor with enthusiastic ecstasies which lead astray. They are the echo of the voice that spoke to Elijah. Like him, flee away from the corruptions of Ahab's splendid court, and fasting in spirit, hide within the cave where darkness and solitude dwell. Let not the whirlwind appal thee, nor the fire dazzle thee; but when these natural, though powerful commotions have passed, fold thy face in the mantle of self-annihilation, and come forth from that darkness into the full light of God. Then whatever the 'still small voice' shall utter, that DO!

But, my dear child, I long to impress upon you what you have not yet learned, I think, knowing how your life has passed away. Not in action, but in passion, is the true life best nourished and developed. Herein consists the grand difference between the immortal and immediate. Matter can act, even inorganic combinations, with celerity and force, a thousandfold greater than our greatest capacities. In silence and solitude, the highest achievements of man have been wrought out — and not by labor. In the history of nations this is confirmed; in the personal history of the Hebrews it stands out at every page; and in the life of Christ, — was not the well-nigh mute and helpless Close infinitely more a testimony of his Godship, than his most amazing miracles, or the awful accompaniments of his death? None but Christ could have so suffered, and been *silent;* none could have so blessed and comforted his murderers.

I feel greatly anxious that you should pass quietly through two or three years to come. Do not be precipitate. The fault of youth is haste.

What you say of religious 'cant' is too true. It was always a terrible annoyance to me, and happily I never heard it at home. My father is a man of lofty religious views — the old-martyr faith — but kindly and genial, and inclined to affinities. He never taught us to rely upon any written creed, and left us the widest range of liberty, while he sternly upheld in his own life the principles he professed; often, very often,

apparently to the utter destruction of his earthly prospects. But God willed it not so, and blessed him in heart and soul, in family and friends, in health and worldly goods. I wish you knew him. He at once attracts the young, as he yearns to them; and many a Christian heart, in many lands, and of all creeds, trace their first religious convictions to his original, searching, plain, homely remarks. It never mattered to him what name his friends were called by; he always saw by intuition whether they possessed the vitality that lasts to eternity. It seems to me you now want a healthy atmosphere, that will teach you to rely on the strength God gives his children. In all great questions, human individuality asserts itself. In the main we live in masses, but in the hours of the soul's deepest experience, it must stand nakedly alone before God. You can rely on none, nor need to. There are other seasons than that of Death, when no hand can uphold, and the tenderest friends cannot come into the soul's sanctuary. I would willingly spread the breadth of my weak pinion under you, my child, but it would be but for a little. Either your own must support you, or you are unworthy to soar. If you ask for strength aright, it will come. Sometimes I fear you do not take the grand question of Life, Death, and Eternity, close enough to your heart, because their magnitude has not been presented to you through the perfecting-glass of suffering. I have all along mistaken your nature, if you are not capable of bearing and conquering great

emotions. That is a weak soul which never feels them.

I have no patience with those persons who glide through the world without a trouble. They have been too lazy or too weak to look life in the face, like a grand old giant as it is, defying us to the combat. I have enjoyed my years past, well, keenly; but I have known as severe awful conflicts of the soul as ever humanity endured. I know by this we are naturally feeble — I know it must have been great inward strength (the gift of God) that could have brought me alive and of sound mind through my trials; such real, tangible sufferings as the angels must have pitied, and my fellows would have wept over had they known. There lie before me this hour some of the fearfullest obstacles that ever beset me, but I will not give back. I have faith in God. Present and impending sorrow are in our midst, but we all are very cheerful; and I say to you, as I say to myself, 'nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.'

LETTER XLV.

May 27, 1852.

Dear Mr. ——

Your letter came to me last night; and to-day I feel as if I must write to you, but know not what to say. It is idle for me to attempt the task of consolation, for

whatever I could say, you know already far better than I. It was so hard that he should have been so far away, but I am sure you felt and feel it now more than he did. For to the invalid especially 'there is a tranquillizing power in the basilisk eye of Necessity.' We accustom ourselves to a painful situation far easier than we think we can. And I know that as we near the Eternal and Infinite, our ordinary affections and anxieties become so dim and unimportant, that what would otherwise give us pain, we hardly care for. I was once so ill among strangers that I thought I had but a few hours to live, and it was no grief to me that I could not see my friends. The vision of the long freedom of God's Forever swallowed up every ordinary love and desire.

I hope Charlie did not pine for his mother and brothers; and if he did, it was not for long, and he is past the possibility of sorrow now.

It was very kind of you to write me, when you had so much to fill your thoughts. You say truly that you have my fullest sympathy. But that expresses so little! It does not tell you how my thoughts perpetually strayed last night from the gay chat of the parlor, to a hushed and sad home far away; nor how I wished that I could send you something tangible, which would carry comfort and cheerfulness with it. How poor does every luxury and every creation of beauty, — yes, and even our tenderest words seem, when we would communicate by actual signs, our strongest feelings.

I have been here four weeks, and have received only two or three letters that did not contain painful news. I dread to open a letter. I never remember being so sad as I have been all the long, dreary Spring. Something has befallen almost every one I love. When I wrote you last, my heart was full of tears, though I believe my letter was a gay one.

My dear friend, I feel utterly unable to say anything to you which can either bring comfort to your heart or express my own sympathy. Oh, how joyous will be the re-union of friends among the still meadows by the river of the Water of Life! How will they renew the affections of old among the undying palms of 'the land that no mortal may know!' It is but a little way off, — very near to some of us, oh, how near! — and there we shall walk in the eternal sunshine with those we lately wept for, and we shall acknowledge ourselves recompensed for all we suffered.*

LETTER XLVI.

Shall I tell thee, dear brother T., of my visit to Greenwood?

We paused at the gate to let a funeral train pass in

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* This is one of the last three letters written by Mary Chase.

before us, a fitting accompaniment to the scene. We entered, and turning down another avenue were soon in the heart of the grounds. Spring had been busier even, than the workmen. No nook so sequestered, but she had visited it; no grassy tuft so low, but she had stooped to breathe upon it and awaken the fresh young blades. All among the costly monuments, over the nameless graves, and through the untrodden groves, she had flung her gifts of grass and flowers alike. From choice, or delay, some of those narrow mounds were unmarked by any stone, but Spring had not forgotten them. No flaunting weed had she raised there, but her violets were sown on every slope, thickly as if rained from the cloudless skies above them. The cinquefoil spread its delicate fingers on the margins of the little pools; the homely mouse-ear whitened many a knoll; and the newly-blown wind-flower trembled in the May breeze. The monument erected in memory of Miss ——— soon attracted my attention, rather by its crowded and fanciful decorations, than by any good taste it displayed. How great was the contrast between it and the simple flowers around! We rode on through the winding avenues by tall shafts, heavy sarcophagi, urns of classic design, sculptured angels and men, but everywhere these were to me of secondary interest. I had just come from our northern home where the foot-prints of winter had scarcely passed away, and the freshness, the genial glow of Nature enchanted me. It was not Greenwood in May, that I saw, but May, in Greenwood.

Is it not wonderful that this beautiful spot was found just where and when it was wanted? How surprising is its fitness for the purpose required! Those numberless hills, with gently sloping sides; those warm, swelling knolls; the occasional narrow tables of level ground, furnish an endless variety of scenery capable of the highest degree of embellishment. Then the trees, healthy, full-sized, the natural growth of the soil, the strongly rooted old vines, even the deep-green sod, have a picturesque beauty, and adaptation to the place, rarely seen.

We alighted at one of the inclosures. My companion disengaged the chain that barred the entrance, and we stepped softly in. A narrow level was before us, terminating in a slight ascent. Beneath that gentle, sunny slope was a vault hidden from sight, where the dear friend who leaned on me had seen her babe laid the year before. Over that last home the turf had grown smoothly and evenly, without a scar, but in the mother's heart the grief was not all passed away. She mourned not like Israel's king for his doubly lost son; nor like Rachel who would not be comforted; yet, in the fullness of her Christian resignation, gushing memories of her baby-daughter would suddenly throng her heart, and warm tears would fall.

I remember a few lines which came quick from my heart, to comfort the mother in the hour of her bereavement, — they were these:

The world heeds not mere individual grief:
Nations may sit in sackcloth for their dead;
The black pall hang upon the city walls;
The priests chant mournful hymns 'neath lofty domes;
And all the shops be shut, and all the ways
Be silent where was commerce yesterday:
But when the appointed day for tears is past,
Wide fling the doors! The tide of life flows out,
And all is done! Oh! Mother, softly weeping
For thy lost babe, it is not so with thee!
Thee doth the sunshine trouble in thy room
With its unwelcome brightness; thee the wind
With its glad voice annoys, and all the mirth
Of childhood weigheth as a weary thing.
Never shall that young voice go from thy ears,
Nor that face from the dreaming of thy sleep.

Yet thou shalt not think of her with a sigh
Forever. Now thou knowest of a truth
There is a Heaven, where thou may'st surely dwell,
For there thy babe hath gone; and there she waits,
Grown to an angel's stature in an hour.
The little voice that stammered broken words
Hath found at last the true celestial speech;
And all she *must* have suffered, *might* have lost,
And all the fearful conflicts they endure
Who bear through life a spirit purified,
Have graciously been spared her. Look up, Mother!
Thy child is but an instant's journey from thee,
And when thou goest hence, thou goest THERE.

We sat on the green bank, we the two mourners, and May the rejoicing; and talked of the little sleeper beneath. A few, clear drops fell on the

tremulous blades, — and then May, with her soothing undertones, offered her consolations, and they were accepted. Perhaps, thought I, I hear her voice the more plainly. Shall I not interpret to my companion that which her sorrow may have hindered her from hearing?

'See what beautiful emblems here are,' said I, 'from which the Christian may draw comfort! This new-born grass would seem a miracle were it not for its common growth. When it withered beneath last summer's sun, and crisped and dried away with the winter's cold, who, that had not seen it rise again, would believe that in those slender roots was hid a life which would by and by send up new, waving leaves, and even humble flowers, bearing seeds?

'So when a great and sudden grief falls upon us, our hope and pleasure fade and die away, and in the sere waste of our souls we do not believe there can ever spring again a living flower, — surely, not a fruit-bearing tree. But the Christian's faith hath a deeper root than he knows of until it has been tried. After a season of darkness and seeming death, it feels again the love of God like sunshine, warming it into life. Timidly, a little promise, like fresh verdure, is put forth; then growth brings strength; some little flower-stems peer up, and when the summer birds seek for seeds to feed their young, they come thither and find a bountiful harvest.

'Look at this daisy root. Last year a tiny seed

was planted here; perhaps some wild wind tore it from the parent stalk; now, how thickly these green leaves have grown from that seed; soon a slender flower-stalk shall spring up in their midst, bearing a golden-centered, pearly-rayed star! Was it not so with thy babe? Ye laid her like a wind-driven blossom, a perished daisy; but long since she has blossomed brightly among the deathless amaranths of the courts of Heaven.

'Here grows under our feet the clover with its mystic, holy symbol; and all around the little downy leaves of the cerastium are thickly strewn. In a month it will be gemmed with white flowers, that close at the approach of a shower, and open only under cloudless skies. Thus it is with those who have no faith.'

Deeply interesting as are the associations connected with Greenwood, thoroughly as I admire and appreciate its intrinsic beauty, I am glad that none of our people are laid there, — that I shall never repose there myself. It seems to me that by making the resting-place of the dead so attractive, by visiting it so frequently, by expending so much thought and care upon its decoration, we wed the spirit to the material, and keep down the heavenward aspirations of our minds, which would fain ascend whither the loved have gone.

I would keep the city of the dead sacred from careless intrusion, would destroy briers and shrubs that might overrun its narrow streets; I would raise a plain

head-stone over the spot where a friend's remains were interred, would see that decency and order were maintained there, — but no more.

Far be it from me to treat with neglect or disrespect that tenement which was thought worthy to become the habitation of an immortal soul. But I would beware lest, instead of following the glorified spirit to its new home, I bind my sympathies and interests to the empty tabernacle.

It is difficult, at best, to sever our affections from the material. The eyes, the lips, the shining hair are so become a part of that we loved, that we send down our regrets into their dark grave, conscious as we are that all that made them possess a value, has ascended to the skies.

Yet after all, it may be wise, in the neighborhood of a great city, to lay out such a Cemetery as Greenwood. In the crowded metropolis there is so much of life, so little to remind one of its close, — the keen strife of traffic so readily extinguishes the contemplation of Death, that it is often forgotten until it comes. It is impossible to visit the Cemetery without solemn and wholesome reflections. Therefore I am glad that it is attractive, and that the gay and the rich, — the two classes most to be pitied for their peculiar temptations, — resort there occasionally for a drive or walk. Better there than in Broadway.

When I die, I would not have extraordinary pains

bestowed upon the place where this poor frame shall lie. Bury it in silence and with few tears. To me, high above the stars, it would bring no happiness to know that my loved ones were rearing costly structures in memory of me, or wasting gracious sympathies over my perishing remains.

If they have wealth which they wish to devote to perpetuating the name of their friend, let them found some Charity for the poor, — some School, — or erect some Retreat for the penitent criminal, and call it after her; but leave the earth-born form to mingle noiselessly with its parent clay. Affectionately,

MARY.

LETTER XLVII.

Brooklyn.

DEAR MR. ——

I thought perhaps you did not go away to-day, and I should see you. S—— came to see me at twilight, and told me of your visit, conversation, &c. She said (by chance, I fancy, for it is not like her,) that you said something about 'genius,' and so on, on speaking of my last letter to you. I was vexed enough to fling my flowers out of the window, and grieved enough to cry, but I did neither, and said nothing.

Mr. ——, cannot you concede to me the common sympathies, feelings and necessities of humanity, with-

out setting these down to the score of '*genius?*' Can I not even weep in a corner, or offer a friend the humblest offices of hospitality, without being accused of doing it with peculiar '*genius?*' Oh! if you knew how hateful to my ears is that word *genius*, — how it has been the poison and terror of my life, you would never associate it with me. If I had only been a beauty or a flirt, or danced well, or sung well, or possessed some such every-day recommendation, I might have esteemed myself happy, — but a *genius!* Heavens! The word is a Medusa to turn love into admiration, and friendship into respect. I did believe you saw me, as I am, a plain, warm-hearted country girl, with a soul thrilled indeed with the wild beauty of her rugged hills, and learning of the thrush and blue-birds, her lovers, careless songs, but thoroughly *human*, tremblingly alive to a kind word or look. I am so disappointed; I thought you were my friend. I have always been trying to explode that unsubstantial fiction of genius, but it haunts me everywhere. I hope the angels will never cast it up at me. You will not *then.* This note will surprise you. I write from a quick impulse, that you may place to the score of that poor *genius,* if *you* please, or as *I* please, to that of faith in your kind indulgence of my wayward fancies.

LETTER XLVIII.

Albany, March 31, 1851.

Dear Mr. ——.

Pshaw! This letter-writing is a miserable substitute for speech and hearing! My warm fingers have dampened this paper with resting on it, and Nell's pen, which seems strange to me, and stiff and unmanageable, is sprung wide with my careless scratching on the desk. I have thought a summer evening's fill of witty, philosophic, poetic things that I could say to you, but like poor Dora's sum that 'would n't add up,' they will not write themselves down, — and this lazy hand! You must believe me on trust. Your letter was a text-book of a hundred and fifty thoughts. I only wish you *would*, — I wish you could find out the 'key-note of my spirit.' If it did not do you any good, it would certainly be an El Dorado to me. But the search would not pay! What a strange, adventurous pursuit you would have of it! What laborious travel, like that of Satan through Chaos, where he found 'neither sea nor good dry ground.' What odds and ends of beautiful fancies, fiery imaginings, tender conceptions, — what tattered and cobwebbed draperies of reflection, what gleaming fragments of fiery resolve, what exquisite beginnings without conclusion, what brilliant conclusions that never had a commencement, hopes, purposes, influences, ideas, — elements that never obeyed Heaven's first law, — you would stumble among. I

fear you would find no 'key' of any kind among this elegant rubbish. No wonder you do not understand all my letters. When I write most truthfully I am least clear. I *can* be as clear as a summer-brook, and as shallow. But this need not be so, only I am withheld by some inertia, I know not what, from remedying these evils. I know, and trembling own it, that a rich dowry has been lavished upon me. I know that much which many would exchange half a life for has been poured into my wasteful keeping. I know that I am the faithless steward of priceless wealth, and I weep and repent for my unprofitable stewardship, but never do better. My feeble soul stretches out her hands for help in vain. She needs none, but she has forgotten how to use her own power. Yet I am only making a dim matter more nebulous. My subject is so subtle, I cannot grasp it and hold it up to you clearly. I never tried to write of it before. So let it pass.

Your letter, — you see this is nothing original, I am only *replying*, — took my very breath away at one page. I am glad the world is so wide; I am glad I cannot see you; I am very glad you cannot speak to me. You would kill me in a week with your 'concentrated thought, feeling, passion,' your 'disciplined and spurred energy,' your 'faithful, unwavering, untiring work,' so recommended to me. That is manly, and becomes *you;* but poor I, alas, the daughter of the morning twilight, visited by memories of the early gleams, the glorious bird-songs, and the rustling leaf-

voices that were twins with me, can never reach the bold noon. When I read Browning's Poems last summer, reclining on the hill-side in a half dream, the words (commencing a chapter,) '*Paracelsus attains*,' struck me like a flash of lightning. I closed the book, it dropped, and the veronicas were aware of a quick rain falling on their painted cups, as they grew close to me, for I never yet had attained!

I have said too much, — more than I ever did, — and you see the impossibility of fathoming this Sphynx riddle. There is no clue to this mortal labyrinth of which I am guardian. I wish there were. Life is a mystery, thought is a puzzle in every one, to every one; in me the enigma is only a little more covert. But this consciousness of my peculiar spiritual constitution does much affect my daily goings on. When friends praise me, I dare not build my vanity thereon, for I know so well how much I have left undone. When envious people (of which, Heaven be praised, I believe there are but few,) speak despitefully of me, I comfort myself with the knowledge that I have capacities and powers they never dreamed of; and when my lovers flatter me, I feel a sudden bright scorn flash up to my very eyes, and I could strike them, if it were womanly, for I know by how much I am above and below flattery.

I have not cared to write much ever, — have composed a thousand poems that were never daguerreotyped on paper. Within a day or two, however, I

have set up a new resolution. I think I shall write more, and with greater carefulness than formerly. I am conscious of much unused power, have felt a naughty pride in knowing that my best thoughts, the finest conceptions of my mind, were my own. Did you think I used the full sweep of my pinions? Did you suppose the nestling of the hills could mount no higher than where she could see the summer-brook and the flowers? She did long believe that the folded wing was only to be spread in a purer ether, sunned in fadeless light. But a new and glorious youth has fallen upon her. Every nerve thrills with the gift of a fresh life. The world is so beautiful, existence so grand and wonderful a thing, she cannot but be strong in thought as in physical power. There is no stronger spirit beside her to uphold, lead forward, who has achieved more than she; but it seems to her, — a fancy only, it must be, — as if there were such an one, on whose support she leaned, and to whose guidance she trusted.

Mr. ——, won't you speak to me of these things by-and-by, in the solemn woods and on the silent hill-tops? No one ever seemed to guess before that there *might* be something greater, deeper in my nature, than the visible and palpable. You look so clearly into things and seem so kind towards me, perhaps you will take the trouble to help me to a solution of the Problem of Life.

Your friend, Mary M. Chase.

Boston, 135 Washington Street.
December, 1854.

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